Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. April 1889.

CONFIDENTIAL.

(5764.)

F.O.
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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

IN THE

ASIATIC PROVINCES OF TURKEY.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
1	Sir W. White ..	384 Secret	Dec. 24, 1887	Kurdistan. Petition of Mustapha Bey for return to system of hereditary Chiefs. Observations on, and Memorandum by Major Trotter	1
2	„ „ ..	395	28,	Erection of Beyrout into a separate vilayet under Ali Pasha	4
3	„ „ ..	16 Confidential	Jan. 14, 1888	Corruption in the Lebanon. Proposal that British and French Embassies should ask for removal of Kupelian Effendi	4
4	To Earl of Lytton ..	51	Feb. 1,	Corruption in the Lebanon, and misconduct of Kupelian Effendi. To ask French Government to instruct their Ambassador to act with Sir W. White	5
5	To Sir W. White ..	25	1,	The Lebanon and Kupelian Effendi. To press French Ambassador to join him in laying matter before the Porte	6
6	Rustem Pasha ..	Memo.	13,	Disturbance in the Lebanon caused by misbehaviour of two Christians. Facts of case	6
7	Sir W. White ..	43 Confidential	4,	Alleged Armenian conspiracy. No foundation for reports. A Special Commission of Inquiry is sitting at the Palace	6
8	„ „ ..	54 Confidential	9,	Corruption in the Lebanon. Forwards Petition from inhabitants complaining of ..	8
9	Earl of Lytton ..	101	16,	Lebanon. Has asked French Government to instruct their Ambassador to join Sir W. White in representations to Porte ..	9
10	„ „ ..	115	21,	Ditto. Hears privately that instructions have been sent to M. de Montebello "..	10
11	To Sir W. White ..	35 Telegraphic	22,	Ditto. French Government prepared to join in insisting on expulsion of Kupelian. Any objection to so acting?	10
12	Sir W. White ..	14 Telegraphic	24,	Ditto. Hesitation in demanding recall of Kupelian was not on his part, but on that of M. de Montebello	10
13	To Earl of Lytton ..	120	29,	Removal of Kupelian Effendi from the Lebanon. Conversation with Secretary of French Embassy respecting	10
14	Sir W. White ..	81	24,	Ditto. Ditto. Forwards copy of his correspondence with M. de Montebello respecting.	11
15	„ „ ..	57	13,	Unsatisfactory state of affairs at Erzinjian, and report that Erzeroum is to be handed over to Russians. Despatch from Acting Consul Wratislaw	12
16	„ „ ..	75 Confidential	22,	Armenia. Porte still believe in political agitation there. Undesirability of ports like Trebizond being left in charge of foreign Agents	13
17	„ „ ..	80	23,	Distress in Diarbekir Vilayet. Despatches from Vice-Consul at Diarbekir respecting ..	13
18	Earl of Lytton ..	140 Confidential	Mar. 2,	Removal of Kupelian Effendi from the Lebanon. French Representative will support Sir W. White if latter will take initiative ..	15
19	„ „ ..	142	2,	Violation of French Consulate at Damascus. Conversation with M. Flourens respecting ..	15
20	To Earl of Lytton ..	130	5,	Malpractices of Kupelian Effendi in the Lebanon. Transmits copy of No. 14 respecting..	16
21	To Sir W. White ..	70	7,	Ditto. Ditto. French will not take initiative in addressing Porte. Must leave time for making representations to his discretion ..	16
22	Sir W. White ..	89	Feb. 29,	Disturbance between Christians and Druses at Ain Shaura. Despatch from Consul at Damascus	16
23	„ „ ..	95 Confidential	Mar. 6,	Present condition of Vilayets of Kharpoot and Diarbekir. Despatch from Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian	17
24	„ „ ..	97 Confidential	6,	Request of Armenians of Erzeroum to be allowed to emigrate to Russia. Despatch from Acting Consul Wratislaw	19
25	Sir W. White ..	100	Mar. 6, 1888	Violation of French Consulate at Damascus. Report on, with despatch from Consul Dickson	19
26	„ „ ..	103	7,	Riots between Christians and Moslems at Beyrout. Report by Consul-General Eldridge .	21
27	Committee of Armenian Residents in London	..	15,	State of affairs in Armenia, and neglect of Porte to carry out Treaty reforms ..	22
28	Sir W. White ..	109	12,	Quarrel between Moslems and Christians at Damascus, and violation of French Consulate. Despatches from Consul Dickson ..	26
29	„ „ ..	114	16,	Extent of famine in Adana district. Letter from Vice-Consul Christmann reporting on ..	29
30	„ „ ..	118 Confidential	18,	Violation of French Consulate at Damascus. Desire of the French to "ménager" the Sultan's feelings	30
31	„ „ ..	119	18,	Misconduct of Kupelian Effendi in the Lebanon. Has spoken privately to Grand Vizier respecting	31
32	„ „ ..	121	20,	Destruction of band of brigands infesting Trebizond and Sivas Vilayets. Despatch from Mr. Longworth	31
33	To Mr. Hagopian ..	..	27,	Armenian reforms. A copy of No. 27 will be sent to Sir W. White, but it cannot be expected that representations of England alone will be effective	32
34	To Sir W. White ..	97	29,	Armenian reforms. Copies of above and No. 27. To furnish a Report on. Could any representations be made to Porte? .	33
35	„ „ ..	98	30,	Destruction of band of brigands under Reshid. To express satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government at	33
36	Mr. Hagopian ..	..	29,	Armenian reforms. Transmits further Appendix to Memorial. Papers may be communicated to Rustem Pasha	33
37	To Sir W. White ..	101	Apr. 4,	Armenian reforms. Forwards copy of above to be included in Report called for ..	35
38	Sir W. White ..	128	Mar. 27,	Beyrout. Arrival of Ali Pasha as Governor-General. Despatch from Consul-General Eldridge	35
39	„ „ ..	129	27,	Sentences passed on Christians in connection with recent riots at Beyrout. Despatch from Mr. Eldridge	36
40	„ „ ..	130 Confidential	30,	Alleged Armenian conspiracy. Suspicions of Sultan that English intrigue is at the bottom of	37
41	To Sir W. White ..	115	Apr. 11,	Sentences passed on Christians at Beyrout. Approves Mr. Eldridge calling attention of new Vali to	38
42	Sir W. White ..	42 Secret Telegraphic	20,	Armenia. Young Armenians returning to Turkey as teachers. Sultan has given orders for their arrest	39
43	„ „ ..	144 Confidential	10,	Dispute between Greeks and Latins as to Holy Places. Despatch from Consul at Jerusalem respecting	39
44	„ „ ..	145	10,	Distress prevailing in Khanoos district. Despatch from Acting Consul at Erzeroum .	40
45	„ „ ..	146	10,	French interests in the East. Speech of M. Deschanel, published by "Revue de l'Orient"	41
46	„ „ ..	147	10,	Kupelian Effendi. Grand Vizier is trying to get him removed to Constantinople ..	41
47	„ „ ..	155	16,	Memorials of Armenians residing in London. Any isolated action by England likely to be injurious	42
48	„ „ ..	159	17,	Further arrests of Armenians on political charges. Despatch from Acting Consul at Erzeroum	42
49	Mr. Hagopian ..	..	23,	Armenia. Transmits appeal to British Government forwarded to him from Van ..	43
50	Sir W. White ..	153	16,	Public security at Smyrna. Despatch from Consul Dennis giving deplorable account of .	45
51	„ ..	165	24,	Arrival of new Vali at Damascus, and departure of French Consul. Despatch from Consul Dickson	48

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
52	Sir W. White ..	166 Secret	Apr. 26, 1888	Memorials of Armenians residing in London. Forwards Memorandum by Sir A. Sandison of his interview with Grand Vizier ..	48
53	„ „ ..	182	30,	Armenia. Audience of Sultan respecting. His Majesty will send two members of Commission to Ambassadors to submit a summary of proceedings ..	50
54	Archbishop of Canterbury	..	May 14,	Armenia. Forwards letter from Mr. Hagopian, with Memorial from Armenians to Government and people of Great Britain.. ..	51
55	Sir W. White ..	189	7,	Arrest of Armenians at Erzeroum. Despatch from Acting Consul Wratislaw	51
56	„ „ ..	192 Confidential	8,	Kupelian Effendi. Probability of his obtaining appointment at Constantinople, and being thus removed from the Lebanon	52
57	„ „ ..	193	9,	Insecurity in Sandjak of Mardin. Steps taken by Christian community and Vali.. ..	52
58	„ „ ..	196	11,	Arrest of Armenian pupil teacher at Erzinjian. Despatch from Acting Consul Wratislaw. Instructions sent to him	53
59	„ „ ..	201 Confidential	15,	Armenia. Nothing new to report respecting grievances of Mr. Hagopian and his friends. Gregorian Patriarch has resumed his duties..	54
60	To Archbishop of Canterbury	Confidential	21,	Armenian Memorial inclosed in No. 54 already received in Foreign Office, and steps taken..	54
61	To Sir W. White ..	156	24,	Arrest of Armenian pupil teacher reported in No. 58. Approves instructions given to Mr. Wratislaw	55
62	Sir W. White ..	219	28,	Arrest and subsequent release of Armenians at Erzinjian. Despatch from Mr. Wratislaw. Arrests at Kharpoot	55
63	„ „ ..	221 Secret	28,	Armenia. Question may become serious. Increasing discontent among Armenians residing at Constantinople	56
64	„ „ ..	207	21,	Insecurity at Smyrna. Chief of "Band of Seven" shot by police	56
65	„ „ ..	227	June 5,	Riots at Beyrout. Sentences passed on Christians. Ali Pasha has refused to interfere in action of his predecessor	57
66	„ „ ..	228	5,	Arrest of Protestant teacher at Erzeroum and exile of four Armenians. Porte has vetoed emigration of Armenians to Russia ..	58
67	„ „ ..	241	19,	Kupelian Effendi. Grand Vizier declares fears of his return to Beyrout unfounded ..	59
68	Mr. Fane	257	July 3,	Administration of Southern Syria. Despatch from Mr. Eldridge, with Memorandum by Vice-Consul Eyres	59
69	„ „ ..	261	10,	Reappearance of Russian brigand Kerim, and outrages by Kurds near Erzeroum ..	62
70	„ „ ..	262	10,	State of affairs at Damascus and discontent among the troops. Despatch from Consul Dickson	62
71	Sir W. White ..	61 Telegraphic	Aug. 2.	Alleged intention of Porte to settle Circassians near Van denied by Grand Vizier ..	63
72	India Office ..	..	2,	Railway construction in Asiatic Turkey. Forwards Memorandum by Colonel Bell on ..	63
73	Sir W. White ..	63 Telegraphic	10.	Asiatic railway schemes. Colonel Alt's proposals. Inexpediency of supporting officially any particular scheme	65
74	„ „ ..	309 Confidential	10.	Extends above	66
75	„ „ ..	307	7,	Alleged intention of Porte to settle Circassians near Van. Memorandum by Sir A. Sandison	66
76	Sir R. Morier ..	Separate	10.	Mr. Hardinge's tour in Trans-Caucasia. Forwards three letters from him describing ..	67
77	Sir W. White ..	317	17,	Persecution of Armenian Protestants. Memorandum by Mr. Wratislaw of cases coming under his notice at Erzeroum ..	82
78	„ „ ..	324	18,	Alleged intention of Porte to settle Circassians near Van. Replies from Consuls at Erzeroum and Van respecting ..	83
79	„ „ ..	334	28,	Ditto. Despatch from Colonel Chermside. Emigration of Mussulmans from Russian territory	83

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
80	Archbishops' Mission to the Assyrian Christians ..	..	Sept. 20, 1888	State of Kurdistan and feeling of Kurds towards Christian population. Forwards papers respecting	85
81	Sir W. White ..	346	7,	Alleged intention of Kurds to massacre Christians near Kochannes, &c. Turkish Ministers will not admit idea of	85
82	„ „ ..	359	18,	No Circassians yet settled in Van Vilayet. Despatch from Vice-Consul Russell ..	85
83	To Sir W. White ..	110 Telegraphic	24,	Attitude of Kurds towards Christians. Alarming reports received. To urge Porte to take necessary measures	86
84	„ „ ..	286	24,	Extends above	86
85	To Archbishop of Canterbury	..	24,	Attitude of Kurds towards Christians. Porte urged to take steps to protect latter ..	86
86	Consul-General Abbott	4 Confidential	8,	Ditto. Ditto. Steps taken at Tabreez. Order restored in disturbed districts	87
87	To Consul-General Abbott	1	29,	Ditto. Ditto. His action approved ..	87
88	Sir H. D. Wolff ..	170	4,	Ditto. Ditto. Forwards despatch and inclosures from Mr. Abbott respecting ..	88
89	Archbishop of Canterbury	..	28,	Ditto. Ditto. Thanks for steps taken ..	93
90	Consul-General Abbott	6	13,	Ditto. Ditto. Aspect of affairs near Kochannes improved. Prompt measures adopted by Vali of Van	93
91	Archbishop of Canterbury	..	Oct. 3,	Ditto. Ditto. Thanks for Foreign Office letter of the 29th September and steps taken by Her Majesty's Representatives ..	94
92	Sir H. D. Wolff ..	186	Sept. 13,	Dispersion of Kurds in neighbourhood of Kochannes. Despatch from Mr. Abbott ..	94
93	Sir W. White ..	363	22,	Fears of attack on Christians by Kurds. Telegram from Vali of Van denying all foundation for	95
94	„ „ ..	380	Oct. 1,	Disturbances between Kurds and Nestorians. Memorandum by Colonel Trotter ..	95
95	„ „ ..	395	11,	Railway from Ismidt to Angora granted to a German Syndicate. Observations on importance of to Turkey	97
96	„ „ ..	411	18,	Reported disturbances in Hekkiari, and dispatch of troops against Nestorians. Grand Vizier gives no credence to	98
97	Rustem Pasha ..	Memo.	Nov. 12,	False reports as to Kurdish outrages spread by English missionaries. Asks for removal of Dr. Brown	98
98	To Archbishop of Canterbury	..	14,	Conduct of Dr. Brown. Forwards above ..	99
99	Sir W. White ..	448 Confidential	10,	Kaulla Railway Concession. Article on in "Nouvelle Revue." Importance to British interests of securing a share of these lines..	99
100	„ „ ..	137 Commercial Confidential	10,	Identical with above	99
101	Mr. Caillard ..	..	19,	Kaulla Concession. Threat of Mr. C. Morrison to bring an action against new Company claiming 200,000*l.* Danger of to British interests	100
102	Archbishop of Canterbury	..	19,	Kurdish disturbances and Turkish complaints of Dr. Brown. Opinion respecting ..	101
103	Colonel Alt ..	..	20,	Haïdar-Pacha Railway Company and Kaulla Concession. Steps taken by former to maintain their preferential rights	101
104	To Sir W. White ..	354	26,	Kaulla Concession, and Colonel Alt's attitude towards. Forwards copy of No. 101. To press Porte to arrange settlement of claims..	102
105	To Mr. Caillard ..	..	26,	Ditto. Ditto. Position of Her Majesty's Government in the matter. Sir W. White instructed as above	102
106	Memorandum by Mr. A. Riley	..	Dec. 1,	Outrages on Christians in Kurdistan. Position of Assyrian Christians. Relations of Archbishop's Mission towards	103
107	To Sir W. White ..	368	4,	Publication of Armenian newspaper in London. Rustem Pasha informed that Her Majesty's Government have no power to stop	106

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
108	To Sir W. White ..	375	Dec. 10, 1888	Reported hostilities between Kurds and Nestorians, and Turkish complaints of Dr. Brown. Correspondence respecting. Report should be obtained from Vice-Consul at Van	
109	„ „ ..	376 Secret	10,	Ditto. Ditto. Any attempt to remove Dr. Brown will lead to demand in Parliament for papers, which would produce painful impression ..	106
110	To Sir E. Malet ..	302	10,	Religious liberty in Turkey, and ill-treatment of Nicolaki Effendi by Trebizond authorities. Forwards collection of printed correspondence respecting	107
111	To Rustem Pasha ..	..	10,	Kurds and Nestorians. Turkish complaints of Dr. Brown unfounded. Cannot take steps to have him removed	107
112	Sir W. White ..	487 Confidential	8,	Publication of "Haiasdan" in London. Conversation with Armenian Patriarch respecting	108
113	To Sir W. White ..	386	17,	Ditto. Ditto. Approves his language to Armenian Patriarch. Fowards copy of police report respecting paper in question ..	108
114	„ „ ..	504	19,	Armenian pupil teacher at Erzeroum sentenced to exile for life. Steps taken to obtain his release pending appeal to Constantinople ..	108
115	„ „ ..	510	22,	Corruption in the Lebanon. Despatch from Mr. Eldridge	109

APPENDIX.

Correspondence respecting the Election of a Vekil for the Protestant Community in Turkey.

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
1	Sir W. White ..	167	Apr. 26, 1888	Refusal of Porte to recognize election of Vekil for Protestant community. Correspondence with Evangelical Alliance and Memoranda by Sir A. Sandison and Mr. Block ..	113
2	Mr. Stronge ..	243	June 22,	Ditto. Ditto. Memorandum by Mr. Block of an interview with Grand Vizier ..	115
3	Evangelical Alliance..	..	29,	Religious liberty in Turkey, and election of Protestant Vekil. Condition of Christians in Kurdistan. Correspondence respecting ..	116
4	To Evangelical Alliance	..	July 3,	Copies of above will be forwarded to Sir W. White	117
5	Sir W. White ..	354	Sept. 11,	Protestant Vekil. Election of M. Boyadjian approved by Council of Ministers, but some of the Protestants object to him. Forwards Memoranda of rival parties	118
6	To Sir W. White ..	293	29,	Ditto. Ditto. His action approved. Concurs in view that other Protestant Representatives at Constantinople should join Her Majesty's Embassy in any representations to Porte ..	122
7	Sir W. White ..	404	Oct. 13,	Alleged persecution of Protestant Armenians at Samsoon. Their Petition to Grand Vizier. Advice given with regard to	123
8	Evangelical Alliance..	..	Nov. 13,	Persecution of Nicolaki Effendi. Asks that further representations be made to Porte on behalf of	124
9	To Sir W. White ..	350	20,	Ill-treatment of Nicolaki Effendi. Copy of No. 8. To intimate that case is attracting attention in England	125
10	To Evangelical Alliance	..	20,	Ditto. Ditto. Steps taken with regard to ..	126
11	Evangelical Alliance..	..	26,	Persecution of Nicolaki Effendi. Thanks for Foreign Office letter of the 20th instant. Desirability of Germany supporting action of Sir W. White	126

ERRATUM.

Page 32, line 3. For "Swas" read "Sivas."

Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. January 1889.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Administrative Reforms in the Asiatic Provinces of Turkey.

No. 1.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 2, 1888.)

(No. 384. Secret.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 24, 1887.

IN the copies of despatches your Lordship was pleased to send me from Sir E. Baring with your Nos. 264 and 270, Secret, dated the 10th and 16th November, 1887, reference is made to the request of one Mustafa Bey, who petitions the Queen and begs that Her Majesty's Government should favour reforms in Kurdistan, with a view to the return to power in that province of the former system of hereditary Chiefs, and the petitioner further alleges that he is the descendant of one of these.

Your Lordship instructs me to make observations on this demand of Mustafa Bey for the intervention of Her Majesty's Government.

His demand consists in asking that the Sultan should reverse the policy pursued for upwards of twenty years in this Empire tending to substitute the power of the Central Government for that of the local hereditary Chiefs.

It is well known that for centuries parts of Turkey were inhabited by warlike tribes, independent in their habits, and brought very imperfectly, if at all, under the subjection of the Sublime Porte.

Such was the case in parts of Syria, in Bosnia, in Kurdistan, and is so still to a great extent in Albania.

In Bosnia it led to a bloody conflict in 1851, when Omer Pasha finally succeeded in breaking the resistance of Mahommedan feudalism and re-subjugated the country for the Sultan.

As Major Trotter, C.B., has resided as Her Majesty's Consul in Asiatic Turkey, and is personally well acquainted with this question, I have asked him to write a Memorandum on the application of this Bey, and I beg to inclose an able and exhaustive statement on this subject, which dispenses me from troubling your Lordship with any lengthy remarks of my own.

It must likewise be borne in mind that the Armenians who have attracted of late years so much attention in England would suffer even more by being replaced under Kurdish Chiefs than they actually do now under a corrupt Osmanli bureaucracy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Memorandum by Major Trotter on the subject matter of the Marquis of Salisbury's Despatch No. 264 (*Reforms in Kurdistan*).

(Secret.)

THE question of reform in Kurdistan, treated of in Lord Salisbury's despatch No. 264, Secret, of the 10th November, may be considered under two heads:—

1. Is the intervention of Her Majesty's Government desirable?

2. Is a return to the former system of partial autonomy under hereditary Chiefs either desirable or practicable?

With reference to the first point, I would observe that the LXIst Article of the Treaty of Berlin involved the application of ameliorations and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and the guarantee of their security *against* the Circassians and *Kurds*. No one has worked harder than myself under successive Ambassadors (from 1878 to 1881) in the unsuccessful endeavour to get these reforms carried out; but I recollect in 1880, when the Ambassadors of the Great Powers were taking the LXIst Article into serious consideration, and I had been urging that, in a joint note to be addressed by the Ambassadors to the Porte, special attention should be drawn to the sufferings of the Rayah-Kurds,* which were often greater than those of the Armenians, it was pointed out to me by Mr. Goschen, who was then Her Majesty's Special Ambassador, that however much he might wish to bring the sufferings of the Kurds to the notice of the Porte, it would be impossible to get the other Ambassadors to unite in going beyond the provisions of the Berlin Treaty, where the Kurds were not mentioned, except as individuals from whom the Armenians were to be protected.

As is well known, the Armenian provinces practically remain unreformed, and although at one time the Porte made some capital out of the fact that the Executive authority in the provinces had been entirely separated from the Judicial authority, a reform of very doubtful benefit, as was pointed out at the time, yet even this reform has been practically cancelled by a recent Order of the Porte, restoring to the Governors-General power to interfere in the working of the Judicial Tribunals.

Considering, therefore, that the LXIst Article has never been carried out as regards the Armenians, it would not appear to be expedient for Her Majesty's Government now to raise the question of reform amongst the Kurds.

As regards the second question: "Is a return to the former system of partial autonomy under hereditary Chiefs desirable or practicable?" I would remark that such a proposal coming from the son of Beder Khan Pasha, seems particularly inappropriate.

Beder Khan Pasha, better known as Beder Khan Bey, was the hereditary Chief of Bohtan, a mountainous district lying north-east of Jezireh, on the Tigris, and was not by any means the *Prince* of the *whole* of Kurdistan, as Mustafa Ali implies in his letter addressed to Her Majesty the Queen of England. There were many other Chiefs in Kurdistan of nearly equal power and rank, notably the Beys of Sulimanieh, Hekkiari, Amadiah, and Rewandooz, besides numerous other less influential Chiefs. Some of the descendants of the Sulimanieh Beys still exist, and one of them with whom I am personally acquainted looks down on the Beder Khan family as *parvenus*, although I believe the Beys of Bohtan and Amadiah both claimed to be direct lineal descendants of the last Abbaside Caliph.

About A.D. 1840, when the Turkish authority in Anatolia was greatly weakened by the successes of the famous Mehemet Ali of Egypt, and in Kurdistan might hardly be said to exist at all, Beder Khan Bey, of Bohban, was appointed Governor or "Mutsellim" of Jezireh; and shortly afterwards the Porte farmed to him the revenues and government of the Province of Jebil Tur (Midyad and surrounding districts), containing a mixed population of Syrian-Jacobites and Kurds. This greatly increased his influence and authority, and enabled him, with the help of his ally, Nusrullah, Bey of Hekkiari, to lay waste and destroy in 1843 and 1844 the Nestorian districts of Tiyari and Diz, murdering in cold blood the mother, sisters, and brother of Mar Shimoon, the Nestorian Patriarch, as well as more than 1,000 Nestorians, men, women, and children. He also carried away and sold into slavery many hundreds of the survivors.

The British Ambassador at Constantinople used his good offices for the restoration of order and security, and many of the slaves were released and restored to their homes. The Ambassador opened up relations with Beder Khan Bey through Mr. Stevens, our Vice-Consul at Mosul, and even sent to that Chief a present of a valuable pistol and knife; but in spite of all this, Beder Khan in 1846 made a fresh expedition into the Nestorian district of Tchoma, and giving out that this time he would take no captives to be subsequently released by the British Consul, gave orders that all women and children should be put to the sword, an order that was ruthlessly carried out, and it is said that several thousands perished.

The following year the Turks sent a military expedition against him, which, after

* Or non-tribal.

defeating him in the open at Jezireh, besieged his stronghold in the mountains where he had taken refuge. Finding the game up he surrendered himself and was carried prisoner to Constantinople—his country passing under more direct Turkish rule.

It is hardly to the descendants of such a man that one would think of handing over the government of the country, although it must be admitted that, according to the testimony of Mr. Consul Stevens who visited him in 1884, the country under his direct rule was far more prosperous than neighbouring parts of Kurdistan under Turkish rule.

Bahri Bey, one of the sons of Beder Khan, was employed by the Turkish Government to collect Kurdish irregulars during the last Turco-Russian war, and great complaints were made against him by the Christians who lived in the recruiting districts visited by him.

Two other sons, Osman and Hussein Beys, escaped from Constantinople in 1879, raised the standard of revolt in Kurdistan, and obtained temporary possession of Djezireh and Schernach (near Saert), but their following never mustered much more than 5,000 men, and they were easily defeated by a small body of troops sent against them, assisted by other neighbouring Kurdish Chiefs, for it has always been the Turkish policy, never a difficult one in Kurdistan, to set tribe against tribe. On this occasion the rebel Beys did not ill-treat the Christians, whose assistance they were anxious to obtain in their struggle against the Turks. I was at Diarbakir at the time, and saw the rebel Beys brought in as prisoners. They were subsequently taken to Constantinople, when one of them was made an Aide-de-camp to His Majesty the Sultan.

Another son, and the one I have always understood to be the eldest son of Beder Khan Pasha, is Medjib Pasha, whom I knew formerly as Governor of Aidin. He is now Governor of Uscup, and is, I believe, personally known to his Excellency Sir William White.

That the present state of Kurdistan is most deplorable, no one can deny. A perusal of Lieutenant (now Colonel) Chermside's Reports in 1882 (see printed papers on Asiatic Reforms (1882), Confidential, No. 150), as well as my own Reports published in various Blue Books, afford convincing proof of this. Sir Charles Wilson drew special attention to the passages in Lieutenant Chermside's Reports, "describing the desolation, misery, and depopulation which follow the establishment of Turkish rule, with its accompaniment of needy, incompetent officials, in those districts which have been until recent years partially or wholly independent." Colonel Chermside writes at the close of his Report: "It is, of course, too late to put the Beys back again, and a highly numerous and efficient gendarmerie is beyond the reach of Turkish finance, if not of Turkish organization. A system similar in principle to the old in rendering the districts locally responsible, might be attempted, with the local Councils and police spoken of in Abidim Pasha's note. The tribal divisions offer certain facilities.

"If the people elect their commune rulers they will elect their own oppressors, and if they are Government nominees the result will be the same as at present. The only hope would seem to be the rather utopian one of getting good subordinate Government officials to control the local ones.

"The oft-repeated proposal of picked Governor-Generals, with power to choose their subordinates, a critical experiment with Turks, and a measure of the decentralization so hateful to Stamboul, would seem the only means, short of foreign aid, likely to insure this."

I have myself in former years, over and over again repeated, that the Turkish laws are good, and that all that is wanted both in the Armenian Provinces and in Kurdistan are good honest competent Governors, having extended powers, and able to select their own subordinates, and as far as possible independent of Constantinople, which is the focus of everything that is bad in the Ottoman Empire. Although Kurdistan is now infinitely poorer, and even more miserable than in the days of the uncontested powers of the old feudal Beys, the country would probably become still worse off if an attempt were made to revert to the old system, which indeed still exists on a limited scale in some of the more inaccessible mountain districts of Kurdistan, where the condition of the Christian Rayahs is most deplorable. One great and most beneficial reform was effected by Abidim Bey in 1880, when, with my most cordial approval, he exiled some twenty or more of the most influential and most unpopular Beys in South Kurdistan. The condition of the population both Christian and Kurdish rapidly improved, but after somewhat more than a year's absence most of the Beys were allowed to escape, and returned to carry on their misdeeds, the Turkish authorities not often having the power, even had they possessed the will, to restrain them.

I consider that any attempt to revert to the old system would be most undesirable, but even supposing it to be otherwise, it is utterly impracticable as long as the Sultan continues to reign at Constantinople.

(Signed) HENRY TROTTER, *Major, R.E.*,
Constantinople, December 26, 1887. *Military Attaché.*

No. 2.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 16, 1888.)

(No. 395.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 28, 1887.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Beyrout, which up till now has been under the Vali of Syria, has been erected into a separate vilayet, and that Ali Pasha, formerly Ottoman Ambassador in Paris, a man of honest reputation but of small abilities, has been appointed the first Governor of the new vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 3.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 25.)

(No. 16. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 14, 1888.

FROM the Reports of Mr. Eyres, dated the 2nd May, No. 18, Confidential, and forwarded to your Lordship by me on the 10th May, 1887, in No. 171, and of Mr. Consul-General Eldridge's Nos. 30 and 42, dated the 1st August and the 24th October of last year, forwarded with mine Nos. 259 and 355 of the 5th August and the 9th November, 1887, your Lordship will have observed how the Administration of the Lebanon is tainted by corruption, and the view entertained in highly reliable sources of the malpractices of Kupelian Effendi, the son-in-law of the Governor-General, and these grave complaints are corroborated by some Notables from the Lebanon, who addressed a Petition to several Embassies at Constantinople in August last, of which I have the honour to inclose a translation.

I had some communication with the French Embassy at the time, but did not see any way to take action at the Sublime Porte.

Quite lately Count Montebello has sent me a private message, through the Secretary of Embassy, Count Jaroszynski, to the effect that if I felt inclined to make official representations to the Grand Vizier with a view to Kupelian's removal from his post, his Excellency would be quite prepared to give me his official support, but on no account could he take the initiative, although he was fully convinced of the corruptness of this official, and would desire to have him removed from the Lebanon.

I am aware that Mr. Eldridge is strongly in favour of such removal.

It is, indeed, an anomalous position that, whilst we are constantly complaining to the Sublime Porte of the alleged corruption of this or that individual functionary in distant provinces of the Empire, there should be such hesitation in pressing on the attention of the Ottoman Government well-authenticated charges against an official holding an appointment in Syria, a province in which the interest of Europe has been always very warm, and where we have Treaty rights.

There are, however, several reasons which make me pause before accepting the French Ambassador's suggestion. There is, first, the suspiciousness of the Sultan, then Palace intrigues, and last, not least, the fear of provoking a Governor's crisis in Syria, which might prove highly inconvenient at this moment, as Wassa Pasha is devoted to his own son-in-law, and might resign, when we should be thus unwillingly bringing on a great complication; and although Sheikh Abd-el-Malek assured us that Wassa Pasha was the servile creature of France, I should not be surprised to find that they had had enough of him.

Under the circumstances, I consider it my duty to lay the whole case before your Lordship, and to await your further instructions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Petition addressed to his Excellency the Ambassador of England at Constantinople.

THESE petitioners, the Notables of the Lebanon, submit that the condition of the inhabitants of the Lebanon at present is a pitiful one, and would cause you to feel compassion in order to release the Lebanon from it. It is an unhappy fate! And how can it be otherwise? The peace of the inhabitants of our country is being disturbed, and the special Constitution granted us by the clemency of the Sublime Porte and guaranteed by your Government and by the other Great Powers is being violated without restraint.

Behold, the man is Qupelian Effendi, son-in-law of Wassa Pasha, our present Governor; and he has obtained great influence with his father-in-law, the Governor, and the keys of the Government of the Lebanon have fallen entirely into his oppressive hands. And he uses this influence to further his personal aims, which are limited to a love of bribery and the accumulation of wealth, and since he joined his father-in-law, the Governor, he has always contrived by every means and on every pretext to take a bribe; so that bribery has become very strong in the Lebanon, and under the protection of its patron, Qupelian Effendi, it is attacking rights and plundering property and selling people.

In this way the inhabitants of the Lebanon are reduced, with their poverty and their narrow fortunes and their small resources, to ruin and destruction; and many have been forced to flee from their beloved country to the neighbouring provinces. And statements setting this out have appeared in the newspapers, and his Excellency Wassa Pasha has read them. But no good at all came of it; for he (Qupelian Effendi) convinced his father-in-law by the cunning pretence that this was an intrigue got up by men with selfish aims and political ends, an idea not to be entertained for a moment. For we have no doubt, nay, are quite sure, that the Consuls-General of the Powers, and yours among them, are as well aware of these facts as we are. But each of them shrinks from taking the initiative in exposing the truth, and they each leave it to the other.

And so our interests have been sacrificed to this indolence.

Now, we pray your Excellency to compel your Consul in Beyrout to report the truth of the matter to you.

And we have no doubt that he will confirm what we have said in our Petition, or even more; and then your zeal and your love of fair play will burn to root out this evil by removing Qupelian Effendi from these parts.

We adjure you by the honour of England to free us as soon as possible.

And if by any remote possibility your Consul should not confirm what we have said, then all we can say is, that we are ready of our own free will to declare ourselves Mussulmans if it be proved that we do not speak the truth! Which God forbid. This is our Petition, and the matter rests with you.

(The Petitioners, the Notables of Lebanon.)

August 18, 1887.

No. 4.

The Marquis of Salisbury to the Earl of Lytton.

(No. 51.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, February* 1, 1888.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* respecting the corruption which is said to exist in the administration of the Lebanon, and the malpractices of Kupelian Effendi, the son-in-law of the Governor-General.

I annex also a copy of my reply,† instructing his Excellency to press the French Ambassador to join with him in representing to the Porte Kupelian Effendi's misconduct, and in urging his removal from the Lebanon.

It would be desirable that your Excellency should represent the matter to the French Government, and should ask that their Ambassador at Constantinople may receive instructions to act with Sir W. White in regard to it.

* No. 3. † No. 5.

Copies of the previous Reports on the subject from Sir W. White and the Consulate-General at Beyrout are inclosed.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 5.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 25.)
Foreign Office, February 1, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 16, Confidential, of the 14th ultimo, referring to the corruption which is stated to exist in the Administration of the Lebanon, and to the malpractices of Kupelian Effendi, the son-in-law of the Governor-General.

It appears from your despatch that the French Ambassador is equally convinced of the misconduct of this official, and desires his removal from the Lebanon, and that he has in consequence expressed his readiness to support any representation you may address to the Porte for this purpose, though he declines to take the initiative.

Under these circumstances, your Excellency requests to be furnished with instructions as to the course which you should pursue.

The evidence against Kupelian Effendi furnished by Mr. Consul-General Eldridge is so strong, and his continuance in office is likely to have so injurious an effect, that I do not think Her Majesty's Government would be justified in abstaining from laying the matter before the Turkish Government.

Your Excellency should press the French Ambassador to join with you in representing to the Porte Kupelian Effendi's misconduct, and in requesting his removal from the Lebanon.

Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris will be instructed to ask the French Government to instruct Count de Montebello to act with you in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 6.

Memorandum left by Rustem Pasha, February 13, 1888.

DIMANCHE dernier deux Chrétiens s'étant livrés à des inconvenants devant une maison Musulmane sise sur les limites du Liban, les dames Musulmanes habitant cette maison leur firent des observations, auxquelles ils répondirent par des injures. Ces femmes, exaspérées, leur ayant jeté des pierres, les Chrétiens ripostèrent en faisant usage de leurs armes. Aux bruits des détonations, les agents de police accoururent sur les lieux et arrêtèrent ces deux individus. Pendant qu'ils les menaient au poste, leurs camarades Chrétiens se ruèrent sur ces agents, délivrèrent les prisonniers, et attaquèrent les Musulmans à coup de couteaux, de bâtons, et d'armes-à-feu. Des renforts étant arrivés, la rixe fut réprimée. Quelques-uns des agresseurs furent arrêtés; un gendarme a été tué et un agent de police blessé. Il y a eu onze victimes, entre morts et blessés, parmi les Musulmans, hommes et femmes, qui n'étaient pas armés. L'ordre a été rétabli et la justice suivra son cours.

Londres, le 13 *Février*, 1888.

No. 7.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 17.)

(No. 43. Confidential.)
Constantinople, February 4, 1888.

My Lord,

FOR the last two months there has been much talk here on the subject of an alleged Armenian conspiracy, of the existence of which there was a suspicion at the Palace—but nowhere else; the persons who had been arrested at Constantinople

* Sir W. White, Nos. 171, 259, and 355.

belonging to the Armenian nation were to have been liberated, but this expectation has not been realized. It is to be hoped, however, that this will be done shortly, and that, as soon as the authorities discover their mistake, orders will be sent to the several vilayets inhabited by Armenians to put an end at once to the vexatious measures adopted in these localities on insufficient grounds of suspicion, and which have in reality produced, it appears, the very irritation amongst the Armenian element which they were intended to repress.

At one moment there was an idea of proclaiming martial law in some of those Armenian districts, but fortunately the Sultan hesitated to adopt so rigorous a measure, for which, really, there was not a shadow of necessity.

Indeed, I am assured by well-informed persons that the scare has been caused by the denunciations of two Armenians who wanted, by this means, to curry favour in high quarters.

One of these resides at Roustchouk; his name is Cazandian Agop, his antecedents are said to be by no means creditable, and his information consists in the allegation of the existence of a Secret Armenian Committee at Bucharest.

The other informer is one called Shabhan, who, having been excommunicated by the Armenian Patriarch lately for gross immorality, became a Mussulman and an enemy of his former co-religionists.

A special Commission has been sitting at the Palace for the purpose of making inquiries as to this proposed conspiracy and proposing measures for the Imperial sanction in consequence. The above-named renegade Shabhan sits on this Commission, which is presided by Dervish Pasha, and its composition is not such as to inspire confidence as to its fairness. Riza Pasha, the friend of the Russian Embassy, Djemil Pasha, whom we had such trouble in getting turned out from Aleppo, and two Kurds, who as such are enemies of all Armenians, sit on this Commission, which has at its service numerous spies and informers.

To counteract its action, the Grand Vizier obtained the Sultan's leave to call upon four of the leading Armenians in the Imperial service to give some explanation as to the condition of the Armenians.

These consisted of:—

1. Artin Effendi, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.
2. Vahan Effendi, Under-Secretary for the Department of Justice.
3. Servitchan Effendi, Senator; and,
4. Nourian Effendi, a Councillor of State.

This deputation laid before His Highness the assurances of the loyalty of the Armenian nation to the Sultan, but at the same time made representations in language both frank and courageous on the subject of the errors committed lately in the treatment of their race, and of the danger incurred by such a course should the population be driven to despair of the future.

They recommended the prompt restoration to his high ecclesiastical functions of the Armenian (Gregorian) Patriarch, who had wanted to resign in consequence of the Porte's attempt to curtail his prerogatives.

The reinstatement of His Holiness as Patriarch has since taken place by the Sultan's commands.

I am watching this question with the deep attention it deserves, but unfortunately do not see any opportunity of exercising any good offices on it with the remotest prospect of doing any good.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have received a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, copy of which I have the honour to inclose.

W. A. W.

Inclosure 1 in No. 7.

Suppressed Article in the "Levant Herald."

IT is a matter of congratulation for all parties that the Grand Vizier should have thought fit, at a somewhat trying juncture, to request the Armenian Patriarch to withdraw his resignation, and that his Holiness should have frankly accepted the assurances of the Grand Vizier, and acceded without hesitation to the wishes of his Highness, which, of course, reflected those of his Majesty. This puts an end to the

Armenian crisis—if the aggregate of certain recent incidents of no great moment will bear so big a name—and restores confidence between the Central Government and a people that has lived peaceably and usefully under the Ottoman sceptre for the last five centuries. The Armenian people, like every other, has its distinguishing characteristics, its peculiar virtues and its faults; but amongst these latter that of political restlessness is not discoverable. In this respect there is a great difference between the Armenian race and those other races which have figured so prominently in the history of Eastern Europe since the beginning of the century. The national sense in the Armenian is not connected with any territorial idea; it is, so to say, an abstraction; its regard is retrospective. Therefore to accuse the Armenians of political machinations is an obvious calumny, and it is very satisfactory to see that it has been so treated by the Government. The conditions of existence of the Armenian people in those provinces which contain the bulk of the nation are not entirely happy, for there is much to disturb the quiet, sober, *routinière* life which is most acceptable to the national tastes. The whole region swarms with foreign agents and agitators, whose profession it is to stir up the Armenians against the authorities and to excite the authorities against the Armenians. The Armenian masses are uneducated, and the bulk of them do not understand the motives or even detect the purpose of these sympathizers with their hardships. The authorities are not superior to Ottoman provincial authorities elsewhere; there may be excellent functionaries amongst them, but a certain proportion of them will always fall short of perfection and, even if otherwise pure, may have more zeal than discernment, or even more personal than public interest in the discharge of their duties. Then, again, the Armenians have uncomfortable neighbours in the Kurds, who in their turn are influenced by foreign agencies. In short, the social condition of the Eastern provinces of Asia Minor presents many special features and comprises many conflicting elements. It thus claims constantly at the hands of the Central Government the careful and statesmanlike handling which, thanks to the Sovereign's perspicacity, it is now receiving or about to receive.

Inclosure 2 in No. 7.

Vice-Consul Russell to Sir W. White.

Van, January 12, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Vali is still sending to prison the Armenians of Van, and there are now twenty of all ages in prison, even a boy of 16. None of these prisoners have been brought before any Tribunal to be tried, nor have they been informed for what offence they are incarcerated. They have been simply seized by the police by order of the Vali.

Every Armenian is now living in a state of terror. No documents or books of any importance have been found in the houses searched.

I can assure your Excellency that there is not the slightest reason for the Vali using such harsh measures against the Armenians. There is not the slightest evidence of their having at present shown any disloyalty to the Turkish Government, or that they are intriguing with any other Government to obtain their liberty.

Their faith in the Russian has quite died out. There is a party, no doubt, who secretly hope to see the day when the Treaty of Berlin is fully carried out. These are the very people who counsel the Armenians to wait and have patience.

It is perfectly ridiculous for the Turkish Government to fear the Van Armenians, as they are perfectly broken in courage and the abject slaves of the Turks, and, to gain favour with them, even intrigue against their own nation.

What they would do if they were united and supported by a foreign Power, I cannot say.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 8.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 17.)

(No. 54. Confidential.)

Constantinople, February 9, 1888.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 16, Confidential, of the 14th ultimo, I had the honour to report on the subject of the corruption in the Government of the Lebanon, and of the difficulties of bringing the matter before the Sublime Porte.

I now have the honour to inclose the copy of a Petition I have received from certain inhabitants of the Lebanon, without signatures, complaining of the corruption of Koupelian.

If your Lordship approves, I should like to send a copy of it to Mr. Eldridge, authorizing him to use his discretion in making some observation to Wassa Pasha on the subject of the conduct of his son-in-law, Koupelian, as to which there appears no doubt, and calling the serious attention of the Vali on the subject, cautioning his Excellency that, however unwillingly, the Powers may be compelled to take notice of it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Petition from Inhabitants of the Lebanon to the Representatives of the Great Powers.

C'EST aux Représentants des Grandes Puissances, garantes du Règlement Organique, que nous vous adressons dans notre détresse en les conjurant encore une fois de nous arracher au griffies du vautoir immonde et rapace qui dévalise le Liban et y sème la corruption et la division.

Nous voulons parler de l'infâme et ignoble Kupélian Effendi. Cet homme est capable de toutes les vilanies et de toutes les monstruosités, et comment ne le serait-il pas lui qui a osé attenter à l'honneur de son beau-père Vassa Pasha.

Ayez pitié de nous. Engagez vos Consuls à Beyrout de vous tenir au courant de la vérité, et dans vos sentiments de loyauté vous n'hésiterez pas alors de faire droit à nos plaints.

Liban, Janvier 1888.

No. 9.

The Earl of Lytton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 17.)

(No. 101.)

Paris, February 16, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a *note verbale* in which, in obedience to the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 51 of the 1st instant, I have asked that the French Ambassador at Constantinople should receive instructions to act with Sir William White in representing to the Porte the malpractices of Kupelian Effendi, and in urging his removal from the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYTTON.

P.S.—Since writing the above I learn from the French Foreign Office that Kupelian Effendi has been at Constantinople for the last few weeks, having been summoned there by the Porte, but it is not known what are the Porte's intentions with regard to him.

L.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Note Verbale.

THE attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople and from other sources to the corruption now existing in the administration of the Lebanon, and to the malpractices of Kupelian Effendi, the son-in-law of the Governor-General. Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the evidence against this official is so strong, and his continuance in office is likely to have so injurious an effect, that they do not feel justified in abstaining from laying the matter before the Turkish Government, and they have instructed Sir W. White to endeavour to obtain the powerful support of the French Ambassador in representing

to the Porte Kupelian Effendi's misconduct, and in requesting his removal from the Lebanon.

As Her Majesty's Government have reason to believe that Count de Montebello is fully aware of the existing state of things in the Lebanon, and is equally convinced of Kupelian's misdoings, they trust that Sir W. White may be successful in obtaining his Excellency's co-operation, and they would learn with satisfaction that Count de Montebello had received instructions from his Government to act in concert with Sir William White in the matter.

Paris, February 16, 1888.

No. 10.

The Earl of Lytton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 22.)

(No. 115.)

Paris, February 21, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 101 of the 16th instant, I learn privately that, in consequence of the representations which I addressed to the French Foreign Office with regard to the malpractices of Kupelian Effendi in the Levant, Count de Montebello has been instructed in the matter, but I have as yet received no official intimation of the exact terms of the instructions which his Excellency has received.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYTTON.

No. 11.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 35.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, February 22, 1888, 7·30 P.M.

FRENCH Chargé d'Affaires has been here to say that if Her Majesty's Government are prepared, together with France, to insist on the expulsion of Kupelian from the Lebanon, the French Government will instruct Montebello to act in that sense with you. But your attitude seems to him to indicate that you shrink from that course.

I promised to ascertain at once whether you really had any objection to so acting.

No. 12.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 24, 2·40 P.M.)

(No. 14.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, February 24, 1888, 12·53 P.M.

YOUR telegram No. 35 of the 22nd instant.

The hesitation was certainly not on my part, which Count Montebello admits.

No. 13.

The Marquis of Salisbury to the Earl of Lytton.

(No. 120.)

Foreign Office, February 29, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 115 of the 21st instant, I have to state that M. Jusseaud, Secretary to the French Embassy, called here, on behalf of M. Waddington, on the 22nd instant, and informed me that, if Her Majesty's Government were prepared to join with that of France in insisting upon the removal of Kupelian Effendi from the Lebanon, the French Government would instruct their Ambassador at Constantinople to act in this sense in concert with Her Majesty's Ambassador.

He remarked, however, that their information led them to believe that Sir W. White was averse to adopting such a course.

I have communicated with Sir W. White, who has replied, by telegraph, that there has been no hesitation on his part in regard to the proposed joint representation, and that Count de Montebello is aware of this.

I have informed M. Waddington accordingly.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 14.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 1.)

(No. 81.)

Constantinople, February 24, 1888.

My Lord,

ON receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 35 of the 22nd instant, from which it appeared that the French Chargé d'Affaires in London is under the impression that I showed reluctance to join with Count de Montebello in making representations to the Porte on the subject of Kupelian's proceedings in the Lebanon, I lost no time in communicating with my French colleague in order to ascertain how so erroneous an impression should have got about.

I have the honour to inclose copy of my private letter to Count de Montebello, as well as of his Excellency's reply, from which your Lordship will gather that my colleague had no doubt whatever of my prompt co-operation with him, but that he himself was desirous, before committing himself to any definite line of action, of being more fully in possession of the views of his own Government, more especially as he appears to entertain a fear that Kupelian's father-in-law, Wassa Pasha, may be put out by our representations and resign his post of Governor of the Lebanon which he obtained as a protégé of France for ten years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 14.

Sir W. White to Count Montebello.

Le 23 *Février,* 1888.

Mon cher Comte,

LORD SALISBURY me télégraphie à l'instant qu'il est assuré par le Chargé d'Affaires de France à Londres sur le concours de votre Gouvernement au sujet des démarches à faire pour obtenir l'éloignement de Koupelian Effendi du Liban, mais qu'il y aurait hésitation de ma part "to the adoption of this course."

Le seul doute que j'avais tenait à ce que vous autant que moi aviez l'idée que Wassa Pacha, en prenant part pour son beau-fils, pourrait menacer de donner sa démission, mais, après tout, je ne crois pas que cette idée doive nous empêcher d'agir.

J'avais même dit au Comte Jarosynski que je dirais que vous attendiez des instructions plus précises sur votre co-opération avec nous, et j'avais promis d'en attendre le résultat.

Mais d'après les assurances données par M. le Chargé d'Affaires de France à Londres, qui feraient croire que c'est moi qui hésite, je compte répondre qu'il n'y a aucune hésitation de mon côté et que je suis tout prêt à faire des représentations dans le sens de mes instructions d'autant plus que j'ai maintenant l'assurance de votre puissant concours.

Croyez, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 14.

Count Montebello to Sir W. A. White.

Ambassade de France, le 23 *Février,* 1888.

Mon cher Collègue,

JE ne m'explique pas bien le malentendu qui paraît s'être produit à Londres entre Lord Salisbury et le Chargé d'Affaires de France au sujet de l'affaire du Liban.

Le 20 de ce mois, sur le compte rendu que Jarosynski m'a fait de son entretien avec vous, j'ai télégraphié à Paris que "vous avez reçu de votre Gouvernement des

instructions très nettes vous autorisant à saisir la Porte de cette question, et que vous étiez tout prêt à faire une démarche de concert avec moi."

J'ai, d'ailleurs, rappelé à M. Flourens mes appréhensions touchant le résultat d'une action dans ce sens et le danger d'une crise gouvernementale, danger que vous aviez vous-même signalé autrefois à Londres.

Comme vous l'a dit Jarosynski, ne considérant pas les instructions que j'avais reçues de mon Gouvernement comme assez catégoriques sur ce point, j'ai demandé une réponse définitive que j'attends pour examiner avec vous la marche à suivre.

Croyez, &c.
(Signed) E. DE MONTEBELLO.

No. 15.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 3.)

(No. 57.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 13, 1888.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting on the unsatisfactory state of affairs at Erzingian, where Christians are enduring some hardship at the hands of the local authorities and the soldiers.

Mr. Wratislaw also mentions that a report is current in Erzeroum to the effect that that town and district are to be handed over to the Russians.

I need hardly add that nothing is known of this here, but it is a fresh evidence of the unsettled and uneasy condition of this country that rumours of this kind should spread and be believed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 15.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Erzeroum, February 1, 1888.*

I REGRET to have to report to your Excellency that, according to information which I have received from a reliable source from Erzingian, the state of affairs in that town and district is most unsatisfactory. Increased ill-feeling and arrogance are shown by the Turks towards the Christian population, which is quiet and inoffensive enough, and apparently gives no cause for the suspicions of which it is the object. The mail matter of the Christians is subjected to examination at the post-office on its arrival at Erzingian, and on the 25th January about twenty merchants were called before the Mutessarif and ordered to open their letters in his presence. His Excellency, who kept the envelopes, professed to be searching for infractions of the law which forbids the inclosure of one letter in another; but it is improbable that this was his real motive, as Mussulmans receive their letters without delay, and pamphlets, as well as letters, are carefully examined. The inference to be drawn is evidently that search is being made for seditious literature.

The conduct of the soldiers is bad, and the inhabitants are assaulted by them on the slightest provocation.

Altogether, the town seems to be in a state of great uncertainty and suspicion, due, I imagine, partly to rumours of war and partly to an idea on the part of the Turks that an insurrectionary movement is intended by the Christians.

At Erzeroum nothing has been heard of any such movement, but a report is current that this town and district are to be handed over to the Russians instead of the remaining portion of the war indemnity. Naturally this rumour greatly disturbs the minds of the Mussulman population, and leads them to regard their Christian fellow-subjects with increased jealousy and suspicion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 16.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 3.)

(No. 75. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 22, 1888.*

THE Sublime Porte continues to hold to the opinion that there is a political agitation in Armenia, and even accusing Russian agents to be keeping it up.

The Committee sitting at the Palace to investigate the alleged Armenian conspiracy still continues to act, and the persons of that nation whose arrest I mentioned in my despatch No. 48, Confidential, of the 4th instant, remain in prison, though both measures were reported as about to cease.

A few may have been liberated, but certainly not the whole of those arrested; and the Turkish authorities appear by no means reassured as to what may happen in districts largely inhabited by Armenians. It is on this account that I feel it to be very undesirable that Consular ports like Trebizond should be left in charge of foreign Agents or of irresponsible persons.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 17.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 3.)

(No. 80.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 23, 1888.*

I HAVE the honour, with reference to my despatch No. 55 of the 31st ultimo, to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir to Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum on the subject of the great distress now prevailing in the Vilayet of Diarbekir.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 17.

Vice-Consul Boyajian to Acting Consul Wratislaw.

Sir, *Diarbekir, February 6, 1888.*

WITH regard to the state of poverty prevalent in the Diarbekir Vilayet, referred to in my despatch of the 24th ultimo, I beg to submit to you the following information which I have been able to obtain from reliable sources.

As stated in my despatch above mentioned, the heavy rains in the early part of the spring and drought which followed partially damaged the cultivation. But it was the subsequent ravages of the locusts which have completed the ruin and left thousands in utter destitution. The districts which suffered most from the calamity were Bisheri, Turkman, Kiki, Bahramki, and Midiat.

Early in the autumn, anticipating that they would be exposed to the danger of starvation, they presented Petitions to the Governor-General explaining the extent of their misery, and imploring him to advance them a certain quantity of grain that they might have seeds to sow and be able to support themselves through the winter; and although an order was sent from the Minister of the Interior to that effect, the Petitions were rejected, and they were thus left unprovided for.

It would be impossible for me to describe the depth of misery and destitution, aggravated, of course, by the rigour of the winter, in which the poor people are plunged. The accounts received daily are such as to call to my mind the horrors of the late famine, although the price of grain was then more than double what it is now. A respectable merchant, who has intimate knowledge of the state of things in Bisheri, informs me that the people, having no money, have been compelled to sell what scanty furniture they possessed, such as bedding, cooking utensils, and the rugs on which they sleep, in order to buy a few measures of millet to keep their families from starvation, and that there are many who are unable to do even this much; and he further states that a large number of women, men, and children started lately on foot for Moosh, but after travelling a day or two they found, on account of cold and snow, that they were unable to proceed, and were

compelled to return to their desolate homes, and he assured me that a good many perished the hardships they endured.

I have quite recently received a letter from the Rev. C. F. Gates, an American missionary, of Mardin, who has been lately in Midiat investigating the state of the poor and distributing some aid to the distressed. From his letter, copy of which I beg to inclose, you will undoubtedly be able to form an idea as to the extent of the destitution, as well as of the fearful scenes which he witnessed.

I cannot find words sufficiently strong in which to condemn the culpable conduct of the Mardin Mutessarif and the Kaïmakam of Midiat, who, besides being totally indifferent to the suffering of the people, endeavour to conceal its existence, which, nevertheless, is an indisputable fact, from his Excellency the Vali and the Sublime Porte. About three weeks ago I received another letter from Mardin, written by Dr. Thom, an American medical missionary, inclosing a Memorandum on the subject for the Vali, and requesting me to present it in person. On handing it to him I took the opportunity of calling his attention to the serious state of things, and pointing out the great responsibility he is incurring in not taking necessary measures for remedying the evil. His Excellency owned to being aware of the distress existing, but considered the account in the said Memorandum to be somewhat exaggerated. He, however, assured me that he would do what he could, and telegraphed the case to Constantinople for instructions, at the same time ordering the Mutessarif of Mardin to furnish him with a detailed Report. The reply of the Minister of Interior, as I am informed, was most satisfactory, upon which the Vali, with the assent of the Provincial Council, decided that a certain quantity of grain should be at once distributed to those who were in extreme want. But, on the arrival of the Report from the above-named Mutessarif, this project was abandoned; as, basing his statement upon the assertion of the Council of the Caza of Midiat, he declared that the rumour of distress was unfounded, and the people have no need of any aid. Under these circumstances, I felt it my duty to address a telegram to his Excellency Her Majesty's Ambassador, copy of which I inclose for your information, hoping he may deem it proper to bring the case to the notice of the Imperial Government, and advise the Porte to take prompt and effective measures.

In conclusion, I have only to add that the prospect for next year also is not encouraging, as, according to my information, only one-fourth of the land usually cultivated has been sown this year in the districts in question; and I regret to state that the locusts have again laid their eggs in those regions which were devastated by them last year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 17.

The Rev. C. F. Gates to Vice-Consul Boyajian.

Mardin, January 30, 1888.

(Extract.)

IN regard to the accuracy of my information, let me say that it is founded on personal observation and investigation. I soon found that I could not learn the facts in regard to the state of the people from any officials, or from the people. I therefore visited twenty-three villages, and went from house to house searching their "guarrases" (jars) for grain, and endeavouring to ascertain the exact state of the people.

2. The poverty of the people is extreme. They have reached the last stages of destitution, and there seems to be nothing left for them but starvation. I gave aid to nearly 2,000 souls, limiting my efforts to those who had no grain in the house and no means of securing any. I gave one measure of millet and one-half measure of wheat for each soul, men, women, and children. I estimated that this aid would keep them through the month of January. But, aside from these, there are many more who had not food for more than fifteen days or a month, so that in the months of February and March there will be, at the smallest estimate, 10,000 souls in danger of death by starvation in the twenty-three villages I visited. If we take in other villages lying in the famine district, there are undoubtedly from 20,000 to 25,000 souls in extreme destitution. I have not time to tell you of the harrowing scenes I witnessed, nor of the food they are eating—straw, grass, dry figs which fell off without ripening in the summer—nor of the nakedness and suffering of the people.

3. I cannot refrain from saying that the Midiat Government is culpably guilty and greatly increases the sufferings of the people. Instead of trying to relieve them, they are sending soldiers to collect taxes, who by their oppression drive the people away from their houses to wander about in the mountains and perish from cold and hunger.

Lastly, the outlook for the next year is most gloomy; the people have not been able to sow their fields because of their poverty, and on this account there is little hope of their being able to pay their taxes and support themselves the coming year unless some help reaches them soon. The prospect is that this caza will be practically ruined, and people scattered far and wide if they do not die of starvation.

No. 18.

The Earl of Lytton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 3.)

(No. 140. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Paris, March* 2, 1888.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 120 of the 29th ultimo, M. Flourens informs me that M. Jusserand has not quite accurately represented to your Lordship the point of view of the French Government respecting the suggestion that it should join Her Majesty's Government in demanding the removal of Kupelian Effendi.

He had, he says, been led not to believe that Sir William White was averse to adopting such a course, but to doubt whether Sir William was prepared to take the initiative in regard to its adoption.

The French Government is quite ready to instruct its Ambassador at Constantinople to support this step if it is taken by the English Ambassador, but it does not wish to assume to itself the initiative of such a step, and this for two reasons: firstly, because it mistrusts the efficacy of the result, believing that Wassa, the Governor of the Lebanon, will probably resign rather than submit to the removal of his son-in-law, and consequently that the Porte will be strongly disinclined to remove him; and, secondly, because France has on her hands at this moment a very serious and delicate question to settle with the Porte in reference to the recent violation of the French Consulate at Damascus.

If, however, Sir William White, of whose experience and judgment M. Flourens spoke in very eulogistic terms, is so satisfied as to the opportuneness of the moment, and the chances of a satisfactory result, that he is prepared to take the initiative in demanding the removal of Kupelian Effendi, the demand made by him will be supported by M. de Montebello.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYTTON.

No. 19.

The Earl of Lytton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 3.)

(No. 142.)

My Lord, *Paris, March* 2, 1888.

IN the course of the conversation I had with him this afternoon about the proposed demand for the removal of Kupelian Effendi, M. Flourens entered at length into the history of the two incidents which have obliged the French Government to demand reparation for the infraction of the French Consulate at Damascus.

With regard to the first of these two incidents, the French Consul and the Governor of Damascus were, he said, at issue on the question of fact, whether the French subjects (Algerian Mussulmans) arrested by the Turkish authorities had been seized within the precincts of the Consulate or outside of them. To investigate this question a Mixed Commission had been appointed, the two Commissioners being the French Consul and Reschid Bey. Scarcely had the Commissioners arrived at Beyrout before news was received of a further incident of the same kind; and as, in reference to this second case, the fact was uncontested that the French Consulate had been forcibly entered by Turkish spahis, the French Ambassador had been instructed to represent to the Ottoman Government that, instead of proceeding with the investigation of the first case, reparation should at once be accorded for the outrage involved in the admitted facts of the second.

I understood from M. Flourens that he was disposed to accept such reparation as a sufficient settlement of the two cases, and that he is anxious to get them settled as quickly as possible, owing to the extreme delicacy of the question raised by them as to the status on Ottoman territory of the Mussulman subjects of foreign States.

The Porte's answer to the representations of the French Ambassador on this subject has not yet been received.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYTTON.

No. 20.

The Marquis of Salisbury to the Earl of Lytton.

(No. 130.)
Foreign Office, March 5, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 140 of the 2nd instant respecting the malpractices of Kupelian Effendi in the Lebanon, I transmit to you herewith, for your information, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* from which it will be seen that Sir W. White was quite prepared to join with his French colleague in insisting on the expulsion of Kupelian from the province, but that Count de Montebello was himself desirous, before committing himself to this step, to obtain more definite instructions from his Government on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 21.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 70.)
Foreign Office, March 7, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 81 of the 24th ultimo, I transmit to you herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris,† from which it will be seen that while the French Government are ready to instruct their Ambassador at Constantinople to support any representation which you may make to the Porte upon the subject of Kupelian Effendi's misconduct, and the desirability of removing him from the Lebanon, they are not disposed to take the initiative themselves.

The matter is clearly one of some delicacy, and I must leave it to your Excellency's discretion to choose the time which may appear to you most suitable for addressing the Porte on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 22.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 89.)
Constantinople, February 29, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting a quarrel which has arisen at Ain Shaara between Christian and Druzes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 22.

Consul Dickson to Sir W. White.

Damascus, February 19, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that on the 11th instant a quarrel occurred between Druzes and Christians at a village on the eastern slopes of Mount Hermon, called Ain Shaara, which resulted in the death of three Christians, one of whom was a Protestant, and the other two Greek Catholics.

* No. 14.

† No. 18.

Two Christian youths who had committed a robbery of some jewellery, and had been arrested by the Christians of the village, were taken under the protection of the Druze Sheikh of the place, but ultimately confessed their guilt. The Christians thereupon upbraided them and the Druzes, and a Christian struck one of the youths, causing an altercation between the Druzes and Christians, during which a Druze stabbed a Christian, a Protestant, who died shortly afterwards. The next day the Christians assembled in considerable numbers and assumed a menacing attitude towards the Druzes, who fired upon them, killing a man and a woman. The Christians then fled to their houses, but the Kaimakam of the district, who resides at Katana, a few hours distant from Damascus, immediately sent horsemen to the scene of the disturbance and arrested the Druze Sheikh. The Christians also addressed a Petition to the Vali of Damascus, who dispatched more horsemen to the village for the maintenance of tranquillity, and has ordered the arrest of eight of the Druzes implicated in the affair.

It is believed that this incident is due in a great measure to a feeling of jealousy, caused by the recent appointment of a Christian as well as a Druze Sheikh in the village, whereas formerly a Druze Sheikh was in charge of the whole village, and the consequence has been considerable animosity between the two sects. The village is small and scarcely numbers 200 inhabitants, the majority being Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 23.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 95. Confidential.)
Constantinople, March 6, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a Report addressed to Mr. Acting Consul Wratislaw by Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian concerning the present state of the vilayets of Kharpoot and Diarbekir.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 23.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Acting Consul Wratislaw.

(Confidential.)
Diarbekir, January 24, 1888.

Sir,

IN compliance with your request contained in a private letter, recently received, I have the honour to submit to you, for your information, the following remarks upon the state of things in the vilayets of Kharpoot and Diarbekir.

2. I may at once state that, under the judicious and firm administration of their Excellencies the ex-Vali Hadji Hassan Bey and his successor, the present Governor-General, the first-mentioned province is enjoying comparative peace and tranquillity.

3. It would, perhaps, be well to remark that in the Tribunals in the vilayet above referred to, though not exempt from corruption, which is unfortunately becoming so common, the sound influence exercised by the Vali and the honesty of the Cadi, who is also President of the Civil section of the Court, have the effect of checking in a degree the abuse; consequently the complaints against the maladministration of justice are not as loud and general there as elsewhere.

4. The general condition of the Diarbekir vilayet, I regret to state, presents quite a contrast to that of the province before mentioned, but it is the Mardin sandjak to which I beg to call your particular attention, where disorganization appears to be more than complete and the authority of the Government less felt.

5. Bands of marauders, who, under the leadership of influential Chiefs, are habitually roaming about, descend now and then upon the defenceless villages, committing acts of violence of every description, such as murder, rapine, and carrying off sheep and cattle, causing the roads to become insecure, to the injury of trade and the ordinary transaction of business.

6. The number of crimes committed during the year is fearfully large, and it would make the present Report unnecessarily long, were I to mention even those cases

which have come to my certain knowledge; but the following fact, which was narrated to me the other day, will suffice to give you an idea of the extent to which lawlessness and anarchy prevail in the district in question.

Upon the arrival of the present Governor at Mardin, he found a list of names of more than 1,200 men, consisting mostly of Aghas (Chiefs) of villages and tribes, who, having been accused of different offences and crimes, were summoned to appear before the Tribunals; but they declined to obey, and consequently were condemned by default to different terms of imprisonment. The Government was either unwilling or powerless to apprehend the offenders, and the accused did not venture to show themselves in the town; and, as the taxes are collected through these Chiefs, the Governor thought it advisable to lay the case before the Imperial Government and implore pardon for the culprits.

7. It is not difficult to discover the cause of this fearful state of things. It may partly be attributed to the incapacity of those in authority, but the real one is the deep-rooted venality by which, with perhaps a few honourable exceptions, all the officials and servants of the Government are contaminated. Such being the case, the present condition of the vilayet offers to them a most profitable traffic; criminals possessed of means are either not arrested at all, or, if they be, after a short detention are invariably acquitted. It is a notorious fact that no one, be his crime what it may, if possessing means, has ever been condemned. The case of Miranli Mustafa, to which allusion was made in one of my late private letters, distinctly proves the truth of the assertion. He was accused of having set fire to the Imperial Farm, and upon higher orders was brought to Diarbekir to be put upon his trial; but, finding the price demanded for his acquittal too large a sum to be procured here, by the connivance of the jailer, or rather of the higher authorities, he effected his escape from the prison, and shortly after came back with the required amount. Within a few days he was acquitted, after a nominal trial. The amount of money distributed by him was, I am informed, about £ T. 1,600. The Court of Cassation cancelled this verdict of acquittal, and a new trial was ordered. This resulted in his being again acquitted. The money he expended this time was between £ T. 500 and £ T. 600, besides what he offered to the higher authorities in the place. It is remarked by the public in general that, if the Imperial Government, being plaintiff and prosecutor in the case, could not obtain justice, what can the poor people expect under similar circumstances?

8. I must not dismiss this subject without making an allusion to the disreputable acts of fraud and embezzlement of the public revenue which have lately come to light in the Mardin Sanjak, in which the ex-Governor, the Muhasebedji (Sub-Director of Finance), and two or three members of the Administrative Council were involved. The sum embezzled is stated to be more than £ T. 5,000. On being advised of the case the Minister of Finance instructed the Vali to institute a searching inquiry into the matter, and the ex-Governor, who was then in Constantinople, was ordered back to Diarbekir to account for his scandalous conduct. The evidence taken at Mardin was so conclusive as to leave no room for doubting the culpability of the accused, and all honest people expected that they would receive an adequate punishment; but the trial, which was concluded last week, resulted as usual in the exoneration of the guilty parties.

9. In addition I may as well mention another evil, which is heavily weighing upon the agricultural class in particular. The heavy rains at the beginning of last spring, and the drought which followed, partially damaged the harvest, but the subsequent ravages of the locusts in some of the districts completed the ruin, in consequence of which thousands were left in utter destitution, especially in the districts of Midiat, Bisheri, Kiki, Turkan, and Bahrunki. One of the American missionaries of Mardin, who lately visited the first-named Caza to distribute some money contributed in America for the relief of the distressed, states that thousands have absolutely nothing to live upon, and that if help does not come forthwith many of them must starve before the spring. In the face of such appalling and indisputable facts, the Government pleads ignorance and treats the matter very lightly, stating that it is all exaggeration. As I intend to report separately upon the subject, I will not dwell on it now, but would only remark that if the case could possibly be brought to the knowledge of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, whose benevolence and solicitude for his suffering subjects are not for a moment to be called in question, he would, I believe, order such effective measures as should relieve this terrible distress.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 24.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 97. Confidential.)

Constantinople, March 6, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Mr. Acting-Consul Wratislaw, reporting that a petition has been addressed to the Russian Consulate at Erzeroum by a number of Armenians, requesting to be allowed to emigrate to Russia, retaining the ownership of their lands in Turkey. Mr. Wratislaw states that it is anticipated that steps will be taken to further their wishes on the return of the Russian Consul-General, and that their example would probably be followed by many more if the idea were entertained by the Turkish Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

(Confidential.)

Erzeroum, February 22, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency the following fact, which has lately come to my knowledge.

A few months ago (I am unable to give the exact date) more than a thousand Armenians of the plain of Erzeroum joined in a petition to the Russian Consul-General requesting to be allowed to emigrate to Russia and become Russian subjects, retaining the ownership of their land here under Russian protection. This request was accepted in principle by the Russian Consulate, and I have reason to believe that on the arrival of General Drunet, who has been for some time absent on leave, steps will be taken to put the project into execution. General Drunet is expected to return on the 25th instant. The Armenians in question belong to the respectable agricultural class.

It would seem impossible for the Porte to accept such a proposal, unless it wishes to see an emigration *en masse* of all the Armenians in the district. The sentiment of nationality, which is so strong in the Armenians of Van and other parts, appears to have but little hold here, and, the possession of their lands once assured to them, there would be very little inducement for the Christians of Erzeroum to remain in Turkey. It is therefore possible that serious differences will arise between the Turkish and Russian Governments with reference to this question.

The Turkish authorities of the place seem to have some inkling of what is going on, but the affair is kept very secret.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 25.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 100.)

Constantinople, March 6, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus reporting an incident which has given rise to a somewhat sharp difference between the French Embassy and the Sublime Porte.

It appears that an Algerian subject who was accused of some crime by the Turkish police took refuge at the French Consulate. While standing at the door of the Consulate he was observed by an agent of police, who entered the premises, and, having pushed the Algerian into the street, called some zaptiehs and effected his arrest.

The French Consul at once sent to the Vali, demanding the release of the prisoner, and, the reply being unsatisfactory, he subsequently referred the matter to his superiors at Constantinople.

The affair was taken up very warmly by the French Embassy, more especially as the Turkish authorities have frequently attempted to ignore French jurisdiction over

Mussulmans of Algerian nationality, and, as a result of Count Montebello's representations, the Porte appointed Riza Bey as a Special Commissioner to investigate the matter in conjunction with M. Imbert, Conseiller of the French Embassy.

While this investigation was still pending, in consequence of the illness of the Turkish Commissioner, a second violation of the French Consulate took place under circumstances which I had the honour to report in my telegram No. 17 of the 27th ultimo.

In reply to the urgent representations of the French Embassy, the Porte suggested that this case also should be submitted to the Commissioners. To this, however, Count Montebello refused to assent, alleging that, as the facts were practically undisputed, it was a case for apology and not for investigation.

I now learn that the Porte have offered to remove the Vali if the French Government will adopt a similar course with regard to their Consul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 25.

Consul Dickson to Sir W. White.

Damascus, February 3, 1888.

Sir,

I HAD the honour to report to your Excellency this day, by telegraph, that the French Consul in this city had accused the local authorities of violation of the French Consulate by the police, who, he declared, had entered the premises and arrested an Algerian subject, and that the authorities had denied the fact.

The French Consulate in Damascus has been in the habit, for many years past, of according protection to the Algerians resident in Syria, but of late their claim to French nationality has been denied by the local authorities. Several of these Algerians have recently been accused by the police of crimes and other offences, and have evaded the law by taking refuge in the French Consulate, which refuses to send them to trial unless they are first recognized as French subjects. The secret police have, in consequence, been watching in the vicinity of the French Consulate for an opportunity to capture them, should they venture outside the Consular building.

It appears that about noon on the 25th ultimo an agent of police, in plain clothes, seeing one of these Algerians, named Ali Abdul Rahman Ibn Ismail Taleb, at the door of the French Consulate, entered the premises on the plea of curiosity, pushed the Algerian with his shoulder into the street, and made a signal for some zaptiehs, who immediately arrested him. The cavasses of the Consulate quickly came to the rescue, and threatened, it is said, to use their arms, but were prevented by the Consular Dragoman, who simply protested against the proceedings. It is also asserted that the Algerian re-entered the Consulate, and held on by the garden rails, which are entirely within the building, but was dragged away by the police.

The French Consul, M. Péréiié, immediately sent his Chancelier to the Vali with a letter demanding reparation for the insult, and the surrender of the Algerian. The Vali, however, replied that he would order an inquiry, and now denies that there has been any violation of domicile, but alleges that the Algerian was arrested outside the Consulate. M. Péréiié has, therefore, submitted the whole case to his superiors.

I have the honour to inclose herewith, for your Excellency's information, a translation of the account of the occurrence, which has appeared in the official newspaper of Damascus, called "Suria," and which reflects the views of the local authorities in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 25.

Extract from the "Suria" of January 26, 1888.

(Translation.)

IT was reported yesterday that some "gendarmes" entered the French Consul's house in Damascus, and that they withdrew by force from the premises a French subject. The facts which we are able to collect show the incorrectness of the above report. The case is as follows:—

One of the Algerian refugees, called Ali Belal, who is residing in Syria, and has been recognized as a Turkish subject, is suspected of having committed fourteen crimes, as appears from the written evidence which exists in the Police office and the Courts of Justice; and another person called Omar-el-Mejnoun, who is also an Algerian, attempted a few days ago to kill openly one of the police. These two individuals were passing with some companions along a part of the town called "Sahat-el-Duamney," at some distance from the respected house of the French Consul, that is more than 200 paces from it. Some of the police met them in the said locality, and endeavoured to capture three of them, who ran away and took refuge in the French Consulate. The police, however, arrested Ali Abdul Rahman Ibn Ismail Taleb, a well-known criminal, and he has been taken before the proper Tribunal.

The police in question did nothing further than bring the said Abdul Rahman to the Serai, and did not approach in the least the door of the Consulate.

The three persons who escaped and entered the Consul's house returned with another man named Ibn Sefraoni, who is employed in the Consulate. They were all armed, and they were about to attack the police, but the Dragoman of the Consulate prevented them from committing such a reprehensible act.

The correctness of this statement has been vouched for by three of the street watchmen who were passing the spot at the moment that the affair occurred, and they have given their evidence as eye-witnesses of the facts on oath.

No. 26.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 14.)

(No. 103.)

Constantinople, March 7, 1888.

My Lord,

HAVING learnt from some of my colleagues that some riots between Christians and Moslems had taken place at Beyrout, I telegraphed to Mr. Eldridge on the 13th instant at once to report to me what had occurred.

Mr. Eldridge's telegraphic reply, which reached me the following day, confirmed in the main what I had already heard, though representing the matter in a rather less serious light.

I have now the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Eldridge giving a full report of the incident.

It appears that considerable ill-feeling existed between the two parties, and that the riot, which at one time assumed serious proportions, was the immediate result of a very trifling incident. The disturbance was promptly suppressed by the soldiers and police, but not until several persons had been killed and many wounded. The authorities subsequently made many and apparently indiscriminate arrests among the Christian population, the prisoners being treated with great brutality by the police.

Mr. Eldridge states that the arbitrary conduct of the authorities has given rise to much ill-feeling, and that the sense of insecurity is heightened by the uncertainty which exists in regard to the separation of the vilayets of Damascus and Beyrout.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 26.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir W. White.

Beyrout, February 20, 1888.

Sir,

I HAD the honour to receive a telegram from your Excellency of the 13th instant, instructing me to give information with regard to a riot which had taken place here. I accordingly telegraphed a detailed account, which I now proceed to supplement.

Some few days before the riot a quarrel between Christians and Moslems, due to smuggling operations, had roused considerable ill-feeling between the two parties, which smouldered until a small incident caused it to burst into flame. On the 5th instant two Christian lads, having lost a goat, found it decapitated in a Bedouin's house in the Mazraa quarter, which is entirely Christian, except for a few Bedouin houses. There were no men in the house at the time, but the Bedouin women

attacked the boys with stones, and it is stated that one of the boys fired a revolver shot at them. The police appeared on the spot and arrested the Christians, who were taken to the police-station. A considerable body of Christians collected and attempted a rescue, upon which a fight ensued between the Christians on one side and the police and Bedouins on the other. Some Moslems, who were at the time riding in the pine forest near by, came on the scene and at once joined in the fight against the Christians. Some thirty men were wounded—thirteen Christians, eleven Bedouins, and one policeman; one gendarme, one Christian, one woman, and a Druse who was passing by, were killed. It is also reported that thirteen Moslems were wounded, but they have concealed themselves, and it is at present impossible to learn the truth. Osman Pasha, the commandant of the troops, was quickly on the spot, and some 400 soldiers followed. These surrounded the quarter and, according to reports, fired on the Christians, but this is denied by the authorities. The dragoons and police then proceeded to arrest every Christian they could lay their hands on, passers-by not excepted, and in all eighty-five men were taken.

The action of the authorities was prompt and worthy of all praise up to the time when the arrests were made, but later on they committed acts which deserve the severest reprobation. Of these eighty-five persons no less than seventy-eight were not implicated in the riot, though twenty-four were detained in prison; but, guilty or innocent, they were barbarously maltreated by the dragoons, police, and soldiers. They were driven through the streets at the point of the bayonet, with their hands tied behind them, and many of them were battered with butt-ends of rifles on the head and shoulders, so that the blood streamed from them. This abuse of authority had naturally the very worst effect on the Christians, who were enraged almost beyond possibility of restraint, and has heightened the ill-feeling which previously existed. Twenty-seven Christians who have fled are being searched for by the police as being implicated in the riots.

Two Christian churches were entered by the dragoons in one case and by Osman Pasha in the other, to search for arms. None were found, and the soldiers withdrew, but the priests have protested against the violation of the churches.

The Mutessarif throws all the responsibility on the Cadi and Osman Pasha, who took on themselves, as he states, the duty of repressing the riot. I believe it is true that the Mutessarif washed his hands of the whole matter and left Osman Pasha to act as he liked, and there is no doubt that the Cadi gave orders that all telegrams, cypher or other, should be suppressed for three days; though the authorities deny this, and will probably lay any delay in transmission to the condition of the wires.

The state of public feeling is far from tranquil, and several murders that have occurred have not tended to an increase of security. My French, German, Russian, and Austrian colleagues and myself have considered it accordingly advisable to report this fact, and also to suggest that the situation is due in great measure to the uncertainty which at present exists with regard to the separation of the provinces of Damascus and Beyrout; and, consequently, that it would be in the highest degree desirable that this question should be settled, and that a Vali should be appointed to Beyrout, more especially as the Mutessarif, Nasoulih Bey, has displayed a most lamentable weakness, and stated to my French and Russian colleagues that he was not responsible in this case for the public order.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 27.

The Committee of Armenian Residents in London to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 17.)

My Lord, 25, *Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, March* 15, 1888.

WE, the Committee of Armenian residents in London, having upon various occasions successfully approached Her Majesty's Government, both collectively and through our well-known Chairman, Mr. Garabet Hagopian, on the subject of the extremely unfavourable and unsatisfactory state of things produced in Armenia by the inexplicable neglect of the Sublime Porte to carry out the local and administrative reforms promised to the Armenian people by Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin, and, confident of receiving your Lordship's considerate attention, again beg to memorialize as follows:—

Experience of the arbitrary and tyrannical proceedings of the Turkish authorities in Armenia during the past year and a-half or more, when no direct representations were made by the sufferers on their behalf either to Her Majesty's Government or to any of the other Signatory Powers, proves the great value and advantage to the people of Armenia of the communications and remonstrances which Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople was at various times instructed to address to the Sublime Porte on this important subject.

We had almost hoped that Sir Edward Thornton had remained at Constantinople to press to a satisfactory issue the note which your Lordship's Government, in response to our representations, caused him to address to the Sublime Porte on the subject of these long-deferred reforms, and endeavour to bring the Ottoman Government to a sense of its Treaty duties and responsibilities both towards Europe and towards a large and important section of its own subjects.

Sir W. White's recent step in addressing an inquiry to the Sublime Porte concerning the arrest of Armenians for alleged conspiracy and high treason and their indefinite detention in prison has given us lively satisfaction, not only for its immediate salutary effect, but for the evidence it furnished that Her Majesty's present Ambassador at Constantinople and the British Diplomatic Agents in Turkey had not grown indifferent to the unhappy condition of the Armenian people.

In common with the great majority of our countrymen, we believe that so far as the Armenian people itself is concerned, every method of suasion and conciliatory action has been tried with the Turkish Government, but with very indifferent success. The present Patriarch, who has, since his arrival at Constantinople, made the study of Turkish susceptibilities his special concern, has lived to see the ecclesiastical and civil rights and privileges of the large community, over which he presides ignored or contemned, and his own authority, even in administrative matters, passively opposed, and the Patriarchate reduced to a state of nullity.

While we are firmly of opinion that the highest interests of our country are best served by the continued loyalty and attachment of our nation to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, we fear that the persistent neglect of the Sublime Porte to introduce the reforms it engaged itself to introduce into Armenia "without delay" in 1878; the severe hardships and unjust punishments with which it visits all Armenians suspected of writing, speaking, or publishing anything on this supremely important subject; the raids made in ancient churches and monasteries for arms and ammunition; the ruthless demolition of even altars and sanctuaries by the Turkish military in the prosecution of such searches and the sacrilegious handling of holy relics, crosses, Testaments and other sacred objects held in the highest veneration by the Armenian people; the sudden visits in search of so-called compromising or "injurious" books and documents, from which not even so eminent and patriotic a dignitary of the Church as the ex-Patriarch Mgr. Khrimian, one of the Delegates of the Armenian nation to the Berlin Congress, a personage well known to your Lordship, has escaped; and last, but not least of all, the attempts recently made by the Mohammedan theocratic power to put aside and override the principles and provisions of the Canonic Marriage Law of the Church of Armenia and to legalize bigamy in an eminently Christian community, will, each and all, serve to put to a severe strain the dutiful and loyal feelings of a very large section of our people.

We are persuaded, and Her Majesty's Government, we believe, know that the contentment and well being of the Christian people of Armenia is dependent upon the loyal introduction of the local and administrative reforms provided by the Berlin Treaty, and that their continued delay produces the very worst impression in Europe, and exposes Armenia and the rest of the Asiatic provinces of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan to permanent danger.

The Armenians are a naturally peaceful and law-abiding people, and anxious to remain loyal subjects of the Porte. Under great provocation they have exercised much restraint, relying upon the justice of their cause and the support of Great Britain, their most constant friend, and the other Powers that were parties to the Treaty of Berlin. So many years, however, have elapsed since the Treaty was signed, that it would not be surprising if the Armenian people were to yield to despair. Nevertheless, we believe that if the Porte were without delay to introduce the long-promised reforms, peace and contentment will be restored to a now distracted province.

Trusting that your Lordship, who is so well informed of all that pertains to the peace and welfare of Armenia, will take the requisite steps to urge upon the Sultan's Government these and other more urgent and weighty reasons, and be instrumental

in bringing about a result which is alike necessary, beneficial, and salutary to Armenia and the Ottoman Empire, we have, &c.

(On behalf of the Committee),

(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN, *Chairman of Committee.*
PETRUS AGANOOR, *Treasurer.*
M. SEVASLY ("Licencié en droit"), *Secretary.*

P.S.—Annexed we beg to inclose a brief summary of arrests, imprisonments, and banishments suffered by individual Armenians for political reasons between the years 1885 and 1888.

G. H.
P. A.
M. S.

Inclosure in No. 27.

Appendix to Memorial, being a brief Summary of Arrests, Imprisonments, and Banishments suffered by individual Armenians for political Reasons, between the years 1885 *and* 1888.

IN October 1885 Mueguerdich Sefilian was condemned to three years' imprisonment.

In November of the same year Baldoshian, Varjabedian, Thomas Géroian, and Hoohannes Shirvanian were imprisoned in Van.

The Prelate of Moush, the Very Reverend Bishop Krikorios, was brought to Constantinople under arrest for some alleged political crime, kept there several years without trial, and only allowed to return to his bishopric in 1885.

In the spring of the same year Sahag Kaljian, barrister, was brought to Constantinople under arrest, and imprisoned there without trial.

In January 1886 a number of young Armenians were imprisoned in Van.

In April of the same year Apear Kaghortian, teacher in Bashkalé, who had been some time before arrested and then discharged, was rearrested.

The Prelate of Arapker, the Very Reverend Bishop Yéznig Abahouni, who had been some years previously arrested and conveyed to Constantinople under some political accusation, was only allowed to return to his see in 1886. He was never tried.

It is worthy of notice that during the forced absence of these prelates, in consequence of the unfounded and vexatious accusations brought against them by the local authorities, their flocks were deprived of their principal spokesmen and advocates. About the same time, the Turkish Government obliged the ex-Patriarch, Mgr. Khrimian, to leave his archbishopric and proceed to Constantinople, his presence in Van being considered "injurious." In answer to this step, the Ecclesiastical Synod appointed his Beatitude Chairman of its Executive Council at the Armenian Patriarchate.

An Armenian named Ounig, who had come to Constantinople from Bulgaria, was arrested there for the alleged possession of revolutionary documents.

Mueguerdich Terlemezian was arrested in Van for tracing Maps of Armenia, and then discharged. After the encounters with the Turkish military in the churches of Van on the 20th and 22nd June, 1886, he was condemned without being defended, he being absent at the time. Being amnestied on the occasion of the anniversary of the Sultan's accession to the Throne, he came to Constantinople. There, however, he was rearrested and imprisoned, and is still in prison.

In consequence of the encounter or opposition offered to the military for unlawful entry into the Armenian churches in Van on the 20th and 22nd June during a Church election, the chief candidate being a favourite of the provincial authority, thirty-seven individuals were arrested, of whom twenty-six were subsequently discharged, but the rest were condemned to terms of imprisonment varying from three to five years. Ten Armenian fugitives were condemned to imprisonment for life. Avédik Terlemezian and Khachadour Astonian were imprisoned by the authorities until their sons gave themselves up.

Garabed Natanian was summoned to Constantinople and there arrested. He was then exiled to Erzeroum, without trial. He could only obtain leave to return to Van after the lapse of a considerable period.

In October 1886 Avédis Bartévian was arrested in Van, and then discharged under bail. About the same time, an Armenian named Markar was arrested. In November of the same year Karekin Paghéshian and Markar Pejeshgireian were arrested.

In December of the same year the secret police conducted a strict search in the official residence of the Armenian Prelate of Erzeroum.

In the same month the Inspector-General of the United (Educational) Societies in Armenia, Mueguerdich Sareyan, and the Sub-Inspector, Markar Natanian, as the suspected authors of certain documents criticizing the authorities, were arrested.

Also, in the same month, the Sunday-school pupils, Bedros Shadaghtzian, Boghos Kholdigian, Mueguerdich Melkonian, Aris Akhigian, Hoohannes Koukanian, Krikor Beuzigian, Roupen Shadavorian, Neshan Odian, and Michael Natanian, were arrested. K. Beuzigian and R. Shadavorian were declared to be innocent and discharged; S. Akhigian was also set at large on account of his extreme youth; B. Shadaghtzian, B. Kholdigian, and Melkonian were condemned to three months' imprisonment as rebels. N. Odian, H. Koukanian, and M. Natanian were banished to Konia, in Asia Minor.

In 1887, Mueguerdich Sareian, the Inspector-General of the Armenian Schools, and the Sub-Inspector, Margos Natanian, who were arrested, in spite of the declaration of the Judge of Erzeroum that they were innocent, were in March of the same year exiled, the former secretly, in night time, to Konia, and the latter to Bagdad.

His Imperial Majesty the Sultan has recently made a donation, and signified his pleasure to take under his august patronage a ball given in aid of these schools, supported by the United Societies, but the principal officers of the Association have not been recalled from exile.

In the spring of 1887, Mardiros Dajigajèmian, who had already been imprisoned in Van, was exiled to Adana.

In the spring of the same year the brothers Ganampokhian and Markhos Moudigian were imprisoned in Van.

Also, in the spring of the same year, Keork Pasbanian, his two nephews, and Stepan Haïgouni were imprisoned in Tokat, Asia Minor.

On the 23rd October of the same year Father Dr. Arsen Tokhmakhian was arrested as a revolutionary preacher, conveyed to Van, and imprisoned there. His case has not yet been tried.

On the 8th December, as compromised in Father Tokhmakhian's case, the following persons were arrested and conveyed to Constantinople:—

H. and K. Isakoulian, brothers, tea merchants; Tash Vartan (keeper of Yeldez Khan, at Constantinople), and an old man named Haroutioun Aghourian.

Some of the persons who were imprisoned were recently discharged, but other persons have been arrested in their stead; among the latter are well-known individuals and some village teachers.

Intelligence received from Moush states that the Military Commandant of the Vilayet of Paghesh and the Public Prosecutor, with thirty gendarmes, have recently effected an entry into the Monastery of the Holy Apostles of Moush, and in the course of a minute search for arms and ammunition, laid irrevent hands and knocked about the relics of saints, the crosses, and the sacred volumes. The Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople has lodged a strong protest against this violation of the immunities of the Church.

A young Armenian at Ismid, who had in his possession a historical novel, has been arrested and imprisoned as a suspect.

Keork Pashanian, formerly Professor at Tokat, who was recently arrested as a suspect and then discharged, and who proceeded to Constantinople to practise as a barrister, was suddenly arrested, and a search was made among his papers. Although no incriminatory documents were found, he is, however, kept in durance along with other prisoners.

His Imperial Majesty the Sultan has granted the high rank of Bala to the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Van, Halil Pasha. Halil Pasha has been instrumental in the imprisonment, for political reasons, of a large number of Armenians as suspects, whilst His Majesty declares to the Patriarch that he is assured of the loyalty of the Armenians. A private letter from Constantinople states that there are twelve Armenians imprisoned in the Sultan's own Palace of Yeldiz, with all their documents and letters; that His Majesty is in great fears of an Armenian revolution, and has several times invited his Cabinet to devise means to prevent such an uprising; that several Armenian functionaries have been summoned to the Palace, and invited to give their opinion on the situation. They counselled the removal of oppressions, and the granting of freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

No. 28.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 26.)

(No. 109.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 12, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 89 and 100 of the 29th ultimo and 6th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copies of two despatches from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, in the former of which he reports a quarrel between Moslems and Christians which arose at the funeral of a Greek Catholic, and in the latter he gives further details regarding the violation of the French Consulate at Damascus.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have received a further despatch from Mr. Dickson, giving details of the violation of the Consulate mentioned in the postscript of Mr. Dickson's despatch No. 10 (copy inclosed).

W. A. W.

Inclosure 1 in No. 28.

Consul Dickson to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Damascus, February* 24, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency an incident which occurred in this city between Moslems and Christians on Sunday last, the 19th instant, and which, following on the late disturbance between those two sects at Beyrout, and on the quarrel between the Druzes and Christians at Ain Shaara, mentioned in my despatch of the 19th instant, has caused not a little sensation in this place.

Whilst the funeral of a Greek Catholic, of the quarter of the city called the Meedan, was passing on its way to the cemetery, through the Shaghour, a part inhabited by a low class of Mussulmans, a Mohammedan youth used some opprobrious expressions in reference to the deceased and to Christians in general. Some of the Christians who were following the funeral arrested the youth and took him to the nearest police station, but the zaptieh in charge, instead of punishing the culprit, repeated the same expressions against the Christians, and sent word to the next police station, by which the funeral would pass, that the Christians were creating a disturbance. On arriving at this second station the funeral was stopped, and some of the friends of the dead man were arrested, whereupon the other Christians in the procession deposited the coffin in the police station and proceeded to the Greek Catholic Bishop (the Patriarch being absent) to make a complaint and ask for redress, a great crowd of Christians at the same time assembling around the residence of the Bishop. His Eminence proceeded to the Vali with one or two of the leading Greek Catholic inhabitants, and laid the whole matter before his Excellency, who lost no time in sending a police force to the Shaghour quarter, and ordered that the Christians should be allowed to proceed with the funeral, and that those who had been detained should be set at liberty. His Excellency has also ordered the arrest of the youth who used the insulting epithets, and his father; the police officials implicated in the affair; and several Moslems. The Greek Catholic Bishop is reported to have at first shown some reluctance to act in the matter, and my French colleague sent to him his dragoman to say that he was quite ready to take measures on behalf of the Christians if necessary, which offer, however, was not accepted.

This incident, following on the other two above mentioned, and so shortly after the question of the violation of the French Consulate reported in my despatch of the 3rd instant, has not tended to allay any feeling of excitement among the Christians, nor to do away with any spirit of opposition to foreigners which may exist among the more fanatical Mussulmans in different parts of the country. That this spirit has become more apparent of late in some places is confirmed by a letter (of which I beg to inclose herewith an extract) which I have just received from an English gentleman engaged for upwards of twenty years in farming operations in the vicinity of Baalbec, an essentially Mussulman district, and who is now meeting with much difficulty on the part of the inhabitants.

Under such circumstances it is very necessary that the power of the Executive should be in the hands of a prudent as well as an energetic Governor-General, in

order that more serious consequences should be prevented from arising out of the present somewhat unsettled state of the minds of the people.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 28.

Extract from Letter of an English Gentleman to Consul Dickson.

I HAVE been forced to come on here (Baalbec) owing to the people of Neby Sheet encroaching on our lands at Yahfoofa, ploughing up our crops, and threatening our peasantry. As the land in question is valuable, I could not let things go on just as the Neby's folks wished, so I had a formal complaint entered against them, and they have been brought on to answer to the charges. Of course, a number of the officials are siding with my opponents, both Moslem and Christian, as cash is forthcoming, but, as the people are decidedly guilty, I think they will be imprisoned, only I find that there is a slight wish on the part of the Mahommedan population at present to go against Europeans. Of course, I having been here so many years and knowing the inhabitants, each one personally, they are not so hard against me; only I do not like this movement, at the same instant as it were by the people of Swighayeh, to the south-south-east of us, and the Neby Sheet people on our western boundaries; the one party destroying our oak preserves, and the other party ploughing up our crops and claiming land about one and a-half hours' distance from the boundaries of Neby Sheet, and in the real lands of Yahfoofa, and for which we hold the Taboo papers since upwards of eleven years.

Baalbec, February 21, 1888.

Inclosure 3 in No. 28.

Consul Dickson to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Damascus, February* 24, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 3rd instant, respecting the violation by the police of the French Consulate, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that M. Imbert, Councillor of the French Embassy at Constantinople, and his Excellency Riza Bey, Procureur-Général of the High Court of Justice at Constantinople, arrived last week at Beyrout, as Delegates on the part of the French and Ottoman Governments respectively, to inquire into the affair, and are expected shortly in Damascus.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, the details of this incident do not essentially differ from what I have already reported to your Excellency, except that the Algerian who was standing at the door of the French Consulate was not the man arrested by the police, but that another Algerian, who came from the interior of the Consulate during the occurrence, was captured and taken away. The account given by my French colleague states that a secret emissary of the police succeeded in driving out into the streets the Algerian above mentioned, who was standing in the doorway, but that he contrived to escape and afterwards returned to the Consulate. During his struggles with the police several other Algerians who were in the Consulate came to the rescue, one of whom was arrested and carried off by the police, but only after he had been severely beaten on the hands in order to make him relax his hold on the garden rails to which he clung, and which are some distance inside the gate of the Consulate. My French colleague further ascribes premeditation on the part of the police, and alleges that the affair was deliberately planned beforehand. The violation of the Consulate, he states, took place on the morning of the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, when it was well known that the cavasses of the Consulate would be in attendance on the Franciscan monks in celebrating the religious ceremony outside the town gates, and that consequently there would be no one to guard the entrance of the Consulate. The cavass who happened to be present, and who offered some resistance, was powerless on account of an accident which obliged him to carry his arm in a sling. The time therefore was, according to M. Pérétié, well chosen by the police for the object they had in view, and, although it is true that the Algerians who were in the Consulate took up their arms in order to oppose the police, the latter threatened to fire

upon them, and a serious quarrel was only averted by the interposition of the Consular Dragoman and the Consul himself.

The affair will, no doubt, be carefully inquired into by the Delegates, and the exact facts of the case ascertained, but my French colleague complains much of the want of courtesy on the part of the Vali in not, on his representing the case to his Excellency, sending an official to the Consulate to hear his (M. Pérétié's) version of the affair, and to assist him to investigate thoroughly the matter, instead of appointing one of the police officers themselves to hold an independent inquiry.

I have the honour to add that the delay which has occurred in the arrival of the Delegates in Damascus is stated to be caused by the illness of Riza Bey, who has, in consequence, been unable to leave Beyrout.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

P.S.—Since writing the above the French Consulate has been again violated by the police, who entered the building this afternoon to arrest a French Jew. They were fired upon by the cavasses, and the police officer was wounded. I have accordingly telegraphed to your Excellency in this sense.

J. D.

Inclosure 4 in No. 28.

Consul Dickson to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Damascus, February* 28, 1888.

WITH reference to my further despatch of the 24th instant, on the subject of the entering of the police into the French Consulate, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that not a little surprise and sensation were created in Damascus on the afternoon of Friday last, the 24th instant, by the report, which spread rapidly through the town, that the French Consulate had a second time been violated by the police, that the cavasses had fired upon them, and that a police officer had been wounded. I had the honour the same evening to telegraph to your Excellency in this sense.

The facts of the case are as follows:—

On Friday afternoon, the eve of the Jewish Feast of Purim, an Algerian Jew was amusing some children in the Jewish quarter of the town by driving them about in a small cart, but was stopped and arrested by the police on account of not having a licence for the cart. While he was being conducted to the chief police-station of the quarter, which is situated at the northern gate of the town, called Bab Touma, he had to pass, as the shortest way, before the French Consulate, into which he suddenly rushed, after breaking away from the police. He was, however, pursued by the latter, who are stated to have been eight in number, into the Consulate, where they were met by all the cavasses and Algerian refugees, who immediately opposed them, and a scuffle ensued, during which revolvers were discharged and sabres used and a cavass and police officer were wounded. Four of the police managed to make their escape, but the other four were overpowered by the cavasses and detained in the Consulate after being disarmed, my French colleague at once making a *procès-verbal* in the presence of witnesses of the whole proceedings, in the course of which the police who were arrested admitted that they had entered the Consulate, but tried to excuse themselves by declaring that they were not aware at the time that it was the Consular residence. Large crowds had, in the meanwhile, collected around the French Consulate, which fortunately is situated in the Christian quarter of the town, and not in one of the more fanatical Mussulman quarters, otherwise a disturbance might have been the result.

I lost no time in calling on M. Pérétié to obtain from him an account of the occurrence, and he informed me that the facts were as above stated, but he alleges that the revolver was discharged by one of the Algerians in the air, and not by his cavass; and, although he was somewhat reticent on the subject of the wounding of the police officer, I further understand that the latter received a sabre cut on the head.

There appears to be no doubt that the French Consulate has this time been entered by the police, and this incident, following so soon on the former alleged act of violation, and during the presence at Beyrout of the French and Turkish Delegates

who had come to inquire into the matter, shows a want of tact, prudence, and courtesy in the management of their affairs by the local authorities which is inexcusable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 29.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 26.)

(No. 114.) *Constantinople, March* 16, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 35 of the 31st January, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a letter addressed by Mr. Vice-Consul Christmann to Mr. Block, giving some information with regard to the extent of the famine in the district of Adana.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 29.

Mr. Christmann to Mr. Block.

Adana, March 3, 1888.

My dear Mr. Block,

I SHALL now endeavour to give you the promised information concerning the famine in this district. I fear that it will be impossible to give you full details by this mail, owing to the enormous difficulties in obtaining the necessary statements from the authorities. I asked some time ago from the President of the "Commission de Secours" to furnish me with as much details as possible, but, much to my regret, he has not yet complied with my request.

I must say that we never had an absolute exact notion of the suffering caused by the failure of last year's crops; from the beginning there was a tendency to exaggerate the real state, the object being to obtain assistance and relief—in fact, to improve the situation of the population generally, making at the same time a personal profit.

Amongst the four Sandjaks forming the vilayet of Adana that of Adana suffered more, owing to the want of rain, and, in order to give you an idea, I state that the tithes of the Sandjak of Adana, which, in the former year, realized 70,000*l.* in round figures, last year only showed approximately 10,000*l.*, and even this amount has not yet been realized.

The Great Council of the vilayet (Medjliss Idaré) repeatedly pressed the Central Government to grant a sum of 150,000*l.* to buy grain for seeds to be distributed amongst the population; this request was not complied with, but the Central Government promised to give the necessary assistance by sending, in due time, grain for seeds and food.

The following are the quantities sent to this vilayet by the Central Relief Committee at Constantinople:—

1. For seeds.

	Okes.	Tons.
Wheat	1,000,000 =	1,228
Barley	1,000,000	1,228
		2,456

2. For food to the inhabitants.

	Okes.	Tons.
Wheat	1,200,000 =	1,473
Flour	250,000	310
		1,783

3. Cotton seed for sowing purposes, and also for food for cattle, 1,000,000 okes = 1,228 tons.

The Local Committee of Adana has purchased, by sanction of the Central Relief Committee, 1,055,000 okes of wheat, equal to 1,296 tons, of which 1,145 tons have been distributed for sowing purposes; the remainder, 151 tons, have been given as food to the inhabitants.

The general total, therefore, shows:—

1. For seeds—

	Tons.
Wheat	2,373
Barley	1,128
Cotton seed	1,128
	4,629

2. For food—

	Tons.
Wheat	1,624
Flour	310
	1,934

making, in all, 6,563 tons.

Regarding the distribution many complaints have been heard, and, judging from the usual state of affairs in this district, I fully believe that they are justified.

A certain Abdel-Kader Effendi Bagdati, who has not by any means a good reputation, has been entrusted with the delicate mission to superintend the distribution, which is much to be surprised at, and it is therefore not astonishing if abuses have actually taken place. The man, unfortunately too late, has been dismissed, and it would have been much to the people's advantage if he had never been appointed.

His Excellency Hadji Hassan Bey, the Governor-General of Adana, has shown great energy, since his arrival here, in endeavouring to assist the suffering population. The same praise is due to his Excellency, General Akef Pasha, who was sent here from Constantinople to act as President of the Relief Committee. It is with much regret that I have to inform you that the Governor-General of Adana and Akef Pasha are on bad terms, chiefly caused, by what I hear, on account of the already mentioned Abdel-Kader Effendi Bagdati.

I am fully convinced that the Governor-General is a very honest man, and I am sure that he has not profited by his position here as Vali; I am inclined to believe that he has been misled in appointing Abdel-Kader Effendi.

I must also mention that another bad effect of the dry season of last year is the enormous loss of cattle from want of food; during last summer thousands of beasts were sold at ridiculous prices, the proprietors seeing the impossibility of retaining them, and a great part died.

I am very glad to have to state that the abundant rains which have fallen during the last four months give the people great hope of having good crops, which will shortly put an end to the still existing misery. The works on the fields are going on very satisfactorily, and it is a pleasure to see the thousands of workmen returning to town every evening.

I received good information to the effect that great misery still exists in several districts near Adana, especially in the Caza of Cana-Yssaloo, Yarsovat, and others, and I think the Government ought to devote a greater attention to the above-mentioned places, in order to sustain them for at least two or three months, until the new crops become available.

I nearly omitted to mention a great mortality which exists amongst the sheep; I hear daily that thousands die, and in the district of Payas it is said that 150,000 died lately. The Government sent a physician a few days ago to inquire into the nature of the disease; the report submitted was that the want of grass during the whole of last summer had destroyed their stomachs, and that they now suffer from a disease of the liver.

I have done my utmost to give you as much information as possible by this mail, but I must confess it is not to my satisfaction; my wish was to send you a general report, otherwise prepared; however, when I receive the asked information, I shall endeavour to forward you a much better report.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) M. F. CHRISTMANN.

No. 30.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 26.)

(No. 118. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 18, 1888.

IN addition to the details given by M. Flourens to the Earl of Lytton, as reported in the latter's despatch No. 142 of the 2nd instant to your Lordship, on the violations

of the French Consulate at Damascus, the following particulars may have some interest for your Lordship:—

The French Government are so keen just now to soothe the Sultan in every way that they have studiously avoided in this incident touching on any questions of principle.

Of these there were actually two, on both of which the French had right on their side.

One consists in the objection which the Turks make to looking upon Algerians as French subjects, because the Sultans have never recognized the legality of the French domination in Algiers; the second is an even more complicated one.

The Sultan, in his capacity of Caliph, thinks that he ought not to allow Mussulmans who reside in his dominions to be considered in any way under the protection of Christian or foreign Courts, and to admit a non-Mahommedan jurisdiction over their persons or property.

The Algerian concerned in the first incident at Damascus was a Mahommedan, the one in the second was of the Jewish creed.

The French Government demanded as a reparation from Turkey the dismissal of the Vali of Damascus, who happens to be a connection of the Grand Vizier. To this the Sublime Porte very reluctantly consented, but making it a condition *sine quâ non* that the French Consul should be recalled at the same time. The French Embassy offered to do this later on, but the Porte would not give way, and I now hear that both Vali and Consul will be removed simultaneously, though, of course, the latter will obtain re-employment.

Count Montebello has shown throughout a strong desire to persuade his Government to display a conciliatory spirit, and appears most desirous "de ménager le Sultan" in His Majesty's feelings.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 31.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 26.)

(No. 119.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 18, 1888.

AS regards the malpractices of Kupelian Effendi in the Lebanon, Count Montebello has not yet received the instructions of his Government spoken of in the Earl of Lytton's despatch No. 140, Confidential, of the 2nd instant, to your Lordship.

Availing myself, however, of your Lordship's discretionary authority, conveyed to me in your instructions No. 70 of the 7th instant, I thought it right to moot the subject privately with the Grand Vizier, which I did a couple of days ago.

I find his Highness fully acquainted with the subject, and convinced of the desirability of getting Kupelian removed from the post he now holds. He told me that Mr. Eldridge, who is an old friend of his, had written him privately with reference to Kupelian, at which I was somewhat surprised. His Highness added that it was by his orders that Kupelian had been sent for to Constantinople, and that he was seeking for some favourable opportunity to get him moved to some other post; and thus the matter stands at present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 32.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 26.)

(No. 121.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 20, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting the destruction of a band of brigands headed by one Reshid, who succeeded Mindjan Oglon, whose band was destroyed last summer, as reported in my despatch No. 275 of the 18th August of last year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 32.

Consul Longworth to Sir W. White.

Trebizond, March 11, 1888.

Sir,

AS hinted in my despatch No. 21 of the 13th August last, Mindjanoglon was succeeded by his pupil Ghurdji Reshid, as the most formidable and ferocious of brigand chiefs infesting the vilayets of Trebizond and Swas.

Though he threatened to avenge the destruction of Mindjanoglon's band, fear, it appears, got the better of his valour, for he restricted his nefarious exploits to regions beyond the vicinity of the British mines at Lidjessy.

His depredations, however, especially in the districts of Ordou and Uniah, were such that for the sake of the people I thought fit from time to time to urge upon the authorities the necessity of exterminating this particular band of robbers.

I have now the honour to report that the Governor-General of Trebizond has just communicated to me a telegram, received from Ordou, informing his Excellency that in a seven hours' fight which took place yesterday Reshid and two of his companions were killed, and two others were captured wounded, one gendarme having been killed and another wounded in the encounter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

P.S. *March* 12.—I beg to inclose herewith translated extract of a letter from my correspondent at Ordou, giving some details of how Reshid's band was destroyed.

H. Z. L.

Inclosure 2 in No. 32.

Extract of Letter on the Destruction of Reshid's Brigand Band.

(Translation.)

KÉMAL TCHAOUSH, Déli Youssouf, Mehmed Bey, and a few other zaptiehs met yesterday morning Reshid's band in the house of a certain Alidjanoglou, in the village of Kurahodja, in the canton of Ouloubeg.

In the first encounter one of the zaptiehs, Tcholak Hussein, was shot dead, and another, Ibrahim, was wounded.

Several villagers came to assist the assailants, and a severe fight took place. The zaptiehs got a lad to set fire to the house; the brigands would not surrender themselves and tried to rush out. Reshid and his two companions were shot dead, and two others, being severely wounded, were made prisoners at about 4 P.M. The news reaching Ordou at 3 P.M., Bekir Bey, the Kaïmakam, started at once with 100 armed men to help the police.

To-day the bodies were brought to Ordou with pomp, music, and rockets, and Bekir Bey delivered a speech.

Kémal Tchaoush is the same young gendarme who played a great part about three years ago in the brigand Kutchuk-Hussein's death, and was raised then to the rank of sergeant. Deli Youssouf also distinguished himself on this occasion.

Ordou, March 10, 1888.

No. 33.

Foreign Office to Mr. Hagopian.

Foreign Office, March 27, 1888.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, signed on behalf of the Committee of Armenian residents in London, in which you call attention to the absence of efficient measures on the part of the Porte to introduce reforms into the provinces of the Turkish Empire inhabited by Armenians, as stipulated in Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin.

I am to state that a copy of the letter and its inclosure will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, who will be requested to report upon the statements of fact contained in them, in order that Her Majesty's Government may

be enabled to judge whether any of them can properly and usefully be laid before the Turkish Ministers. But I am to point out that in a matter which affects the proper execution of the Treaty of Berlin it can scarcely be hoped that the advice and representations of Great Britain alone will be effective unless the other Governments parties to that Treaty are disposed to join.

I am to add that the Turkish Ambassador at this Court has requested to be furnished with a copy of the Memorial and its inclosure, of which his Excellency appears to have heard indirectly. Lord Salisbury would be glad to know whether the Committee have any objection to the papers being communicated to Rustem Pasha.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 34.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 97.)

Foreign Office, March 29, 1888.

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a copy of a Memorial which I have received from a Committee of Armenian residents in London,* calling attention to the grievances of the Armenian population of Turkey, and to the absence of efficient measures on the part of the Porte to introduce reforms into the provinces of the Turkish Empire inhabited by Armenians, as stipulated in Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin.

I annex a copy of the reply which I have returned to this communication.†

I have to request your Excellency to furnish me with a Report upon the statements contained in this Memorial and its inclosure, and to inform me whether any of them could, in your opinion, be made the subject of representations to the Porte with a prospect of benefit to those affected.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 35.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 98.)

Foreign Office, March 30, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 121 of the 20th instant, and its inclosures, from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting the destruction of a band of brigands which has recently infested that district under the leadership of a man named Reshid.

I have to request that your Excellency will take an opportunity of expressing to the Porte the satisfaction with which Her Majesty's Government have heard of the success of the local authorities in clearing the country of these predatory bands, which were a continual source of inconvenience and anxiety to the British subjects interested in the Lidjessy mines.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 36.

M. Hagopian to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 2.)

25, Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, March 29, 1888.

My Lord,

The Committee of Armenian residents in London have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's reply of the 27th instant, in answer to their Memorial and Inclosure of the 15th instant.

They are glad that the statements of fact contained in these documents will, as a preliminary step, be sent to Constantinople to be reported upon by Her Majesty's Ambassador in that city, and they have the honour to inclose, for similar communication, further and more recent statements of fact brought under their notice.

* No. 27. † No. 33.

The infraction of the letter and spirit of the Article of the Treaty of Berlin concerning Armenia has, from the very day of the signature of that solemn Treaty by His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, been so notorious and persistent that, in the interests of our common humanity, the Committee entertain the most earnest and devout hope that the other Signatory Powers, on being invited to do so, will join in any steps that Great Britain might propose to take in so noble and so highly humanitarian a task. In the meantime the Committee will communicate to their countrymen dwelling in the various parts of Europe the terms of your Lordship's letter, in order that they may take such action as may be in their power to induce the Governments of the countries in which they reside to co-operate with your Lordship in this generous work.

With reference to the request of the Turkish Ambassador, the Committee would be glad if the documents referred to, and which they have had the honour of sending to your Lordship, were formally communicated to him. They say this both on public and private grounds, because they cannot forget that his Excellency's experience as Governor-General of the Lebanon will enable him to use his enlightened judgment on the unhappy and painful circumstances which give its *raison d'être* to the Armenian question, and which can only be removed by a thoroughly honest and sincere effort on the part of the Sultan's Government in the direction desired by the Armenian people, and already advised by Her Majesty's Government.

In conclusion, the Committee gratefully recognize the cordial and sympathetic tone of your Lordship's reply, and express their sincere acknowledgments.

We have, &c.
(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN, *Chairman of Committee.*

(Signed) M. SEVASLY, *Secretary.*

Inclosure in No. 36.

Appendix to Memorial.

The names of the Armenians known to be imprisoned at the Palace of Yildiz Kiosk are the brothers Hovhannes and Karekin Issagoulian, Vartan Tashjian, Muegnerditch Terlemezian, M. Harountioun Aghavnian and his son Krikoris—all six natives of Van; Kéork Pashanian, of Tokat, and M. Sarcian, the Inspector of Schools, in the service of the United (Educational) Societies.

As advised from Constantinople on the 8th March, the examination of these persons had already been completed twenty days before that date and their innocence established; nevertheless their discharge depended on the direct orders of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, and they were kept close prisoners.

Further advices from Van report that on the 17th December, 1887, the houses of Boghos Natanian, Manoog Sosoian, and Mihran Husian were searched.

The Reverend Arsèn Vartabed Toklunakhian and Karekin Pagheshtzian were during 41 hours cruelly kept without food or drink as dangerous revolutionists. Eventually the other imprisoned Armenians, discovering their condition, sent them bread and water through the Turkish keepers, and communicated the facts to the people. The Armenians, made very indignant, sent the Bishop to the Vali to ascertain the truth. The Vali denied having ordered the punishment of the two prisoners by starvation, nevertheless his angry looks seemed to belie his words. The deputation in the end prevailed upon him to send a doctor to attend to the unfortunate clergyman and layman.

On the 27th December Garabed Natanian was imprisoned, his brother Khachadoor being also "wanted."

In a letter written in the early part of February this year it is reported that a well-educated young man named Michael H. Natanian, who was condemned to be exiled on the 22nd December, 1886, to Konia (vide Appendix I), had just died there. He was declared to be a revolutionist. He was born in 1870.

On the 3rd January, 1888, Harountioun Chetchipanoian, Dikran Boylerian, and Krikor Paghetzian were imprisoned. The last two are boys of twelve years of age, and their crime is the possession of song-books and tales.

On the 4th January Kevork Shereniz was re-arrested.

About the same date Vartan Zeronian and Garabed Zeronian were imprisoned for having drunk the health of the ex-Patriarch Khrimian instead of that of the Sultan.

On the 7th January the houses of Panos Terlemezian, Roupèn Shadavorian, Akhigian, Barontjian, Movsès Maloian, and Hovhannes Amadouni were searched. Maloian Amadouni, Barontjian, Maknos Shadavorian, Koulaksezian, Garabed, and Armenag Yégarian were imprisoned; Hovhannes Shadavorian was ordered to forbid his son from pursuing the occupation of a teacher.

The officers of the Government who conduct searches in Armenian houses often carry off a number of articles which might be of use to them: they simply rob the houses under guise of making searches.

On the occasion of the Christmas festival on the 18th January four Armenians who had been implicated in the disturbances which took place in June 1886 on the day of the election of the Bishop in Van were discharged. Among them was Movsès Maloian, who was imprisoned as being the correspondent of the "Arèvèlk" of Constantinople, and as the probable one of the "Arménia" and other papers.

The Reverend Father Dr. Daniel was still in prison on the 24th January. He is accused of having preached the purchase of arms for future use.

Eight Armenians belonging to the village of Alur, where the above prelate preached, were put in solitary confinement.

It is worthy of remark that the Mahommedans are not precluded from carrying arms.

No. 37.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 101.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April 4, 1888.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 97 of the 29th ultimo, respecting the grievances of the Armenian population of Turkey, I transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a further letter which I have received from the Committee of Armenian Residents in London,* forwarding an Appendix to the Memorial inclosed in their previous communication. This paper contains some additional and more recent statements of fact which have been brought under the notice of the Committee.

I shall be glad if your Excellency will include these papers in the Report called for in my despatch above referred to.

I propose to communicate a copy of the Memorial and Appendix to the Turkish Ambassador at this Court.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 38.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received April 7.*)

(No. 128.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 27, 1888.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting the arrival of Ali Pasha, the Governor-General of the revived Vilayet of Beyrout.

Mr. Eldridge remarks that the re-creation of this post seems to give general satisfaction, that it is said to be due to His Highness Kiamil Pasha, and that Ali Pasha enjoys a good reputation.

He further points out that a considerable advantage will be gained by the fact that Consular officers will now be able to interview personally the Vali without trouble or loss of time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

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* No. 36.

Inclosure in No. 38.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir W. White.

Beyrout, March 14, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Excellency's information, that Ali Pasha, whom His Majesty the Sultan has been pleased to appoint as Governor-General of the revived Vilayet of Beyrout, including the districts situated on the coast of Syria, arrived on the 8th instant, and was received with acclamations by all classes of the population, which proves the popularity of the re-creation of this post, which anciently existed as the Vilayet of Saida, but the residence was for many years at Beyrout.

In the year 1865 the whole of the Province of Syria was created into one large vilayet, to which a Governor-General was appointed, with residence at Damascus, occasionally visiting Beyrout during the winter months, and in this arrangement the districts of Beyrout and the coast were included, and Beyrout was reduced to a Mutessariflik, depending, like the other commercial towns and districts of the coast, on the central administration of the Vilayet at Damascus.

The evils of this innovation soon became manifest, as, with the exception of the Commercial Court which has continued to exist at Beyrout, all the affairs arising in any part of the vilayet had to be finally referred for confirmation to the Tribunals of Damascus, the members of which were usually appointed from the inhabitants of that city and the immediately surrounding neighbourhood, who had little or no sympathy with the affairs of their neighbours, who are geographically separated from them by a chain of mountains, and whose interests are, as a rule, entirely different from those of Damascus and the agricultural districts of the interior, and not unfrequently antagonistic to them. In consequence, much injustice was suffered by the inhabitants of the commercial towns of the coast, who, not unfrequently, preferred to settle their affairs at large pecuniary sacrifices to avoid a reference to the Tribunals of Damascus with all its delays, expenses, and uncertainties.

His Highness the present Grand Vizier, Kiamil Pasha, has had considerable experience in the practical working of the two systems, as previously to 1865 he was Chief of the Financial Department at Beyrout, and after the creation of the Vilayet of Syria His Highness, to the best of my recollection, was three times Mutessarif of Beyrout, and I am told that the present revival is mainly due to his initiative, for which the inhabitants are very grateful.

Ali Pasha was preceded by a reputation for great intelligence, activity, and straightforwardness, so that all hope under his administration the important province confided o his Excellency will improve and flourish.

There is one very important advantage which will accrue from this arrangement, to which I have the honour to draw your Excellency's attention, and that is, that the Consuls-General of the Great Powers will be able to entertain direct and personal relations with the Head of the Administration, instead of having to refer all affairs (except those immediately concerning Beyrout) by correspondence to Damascus, where letters frequently remained for months unanswered, and were even lost altogether. When important matters had to be discussed it became necessary for the superior Consular Representative to go to Damascus in person, by which expense, loss of time, and unnecessary fatigue were incurred.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 39.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 7.)

(No. 129.)

Constantinople, March 27, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 103 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting that the Christians arrested in connection with the recent riots were subjected to a hasty trial, were condemned to various sentences, and some even to death.

Mr. Eldridge states that he will call the new Vali, Ali Pasha's, attention to these proceedings, and suggest that they should be revised.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir W. White.

Beyrout, March 17, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 20th ultimo, reporting on the riot which occurred at Beyrout in the early part of February, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Christians arrested on that occasion were hastily tried before the Juge d'Instruction of Beyrout, and sentenced to various prolonged terms of imprisonment, and some, it is said, to death.

These Judgments were submitted to the Superior Criminal Court at Damascus, which confirmed the whole of them without any further inquiry, though I am given to understand that at Beyrout the examination was merely superficial, and conducted in many cases in the absence of the accused, while those present were not even allowed to speak in their own defence.

I am privately informed that the whole proceedings were conducted in such an irregular manner that the Juge d'Instruction protested against them as illegal, but he was overruled, and urged on by the fanatical Cadi with threats to dispose summarily of the case.

In my opinion, great injustice has been committed, as it is a well-known fact that to a quarrel there must be two parties; therefore the question arises why, in this instance, all the guilt should be thrown on one party while the other escapes scot-free.

I do not in any way pretend to prejudge the case, but shall take an early opportunity of calling the attention of Ali Pasha (whose arrival is reported in my despatch of the 14th instant) to the circumstances attending it, and recommend to his Excellency that the previous proceedings should be revised according to law.

There is no doubt that this affair, which was at the beginning only a simple quarrel which could have been settled by a couple of policemen, owes gravity to the unwarranted interference of the Cadi, who assumed powers which he did not possess, and therefore ought now to be made to feel the full weight of the responsibility he unwarrantably took upon himself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 40.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 7.)

(No. 130. Confidential.)

Constantinople, March 30, 1888.

My Lord,

BY the contents of my despatches No. 9, Secret, No. 43, Confidential, and No. 75, Confidential, dated the 13th January, 4th and 22nd February, 1888, I have endeavoured to keep your Lordship informed of what I could learn with regard to the uneasiness felt by the Sultan as regards alleged conspiracy amongst his Armenian subjects.

Somehow or other the name of Armenia is connected in His Majesty's mind with England, and nothing unpleasant can happen there without his imagining that there must be some English intrigue at the bottom of it. There is a certain class of persons at the Palace ever ready to poison the Sultan's mind against our country, and this renders the subject an extremely delicate one for my making official inquiries on the subject in official sources.

As far as I can gather, however, the subject has not any real or imminent importance as yet, but the severe measures adopted by some of the Valis may expose innocent persons to unjust suspicion and persecution in distant provinces, and the unwise and unjust acts of the provincial authorities tend to propagate the discontent they propose to themselves to suppress.

The accompanying copy of a report derived from Mr. Wratislaw is unfortunately an illustration of these practices.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 40.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Erzeroum, March 2, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to my report to your Excellency of the 1st ultimo, I regret to say that the feeling of jealousy and suspicion with which, as I informed your Excellency, the Mussulmans regard the Christian inhabitants is increasing rather than subsiding. There seems to be a fixed idea that the latter are engaged in intrigues of some kind or other against the Government. The consequence is that on the slightest suspicion Christians here are subjected to very rigorous treatment in the hope that the nature of the supposed intrigues may be brought to light.

The following instance will give your Excellency an idea of the very unpleasant position in which they are placed.

About two months ago eight men of the village of Hertef, six hours from Erzeroum, went on a pilgrimage to the Monastery of Chengheli, in the Sandjak of Moush. They were accompanied on their return by a Stamboul Armenian whom they had met at the monastery. On reaching the village this man, according to custom, went to the priest's house and stopped there one night; the next night he was entertained by a certain Ohannes, and in the morning left for Erzeroum. He stayed in the town two or three days, had his "teskéré" registered at the Serai, and quietly proceeded on his journey.

While at the priest's house he had mentioned in the course of conversation that labourers could get from 10 to 12 piastres a-day wages at Batoum, and that if any of those present liked to go there he could find them employment. It does not appear that any of them actually agreed to go, though they were naturally taken with the comparatively high rate of wages. This was repeated to Nedjib Beg, brother of the Mudir, who, in the absence of his brother, reported at once to the Kaïmakam of the district (Passen) that Armenians were being "enrolled as soldiers" The Kaïmakam naturally informed the Vali, and the result was that the priest Ohannes and four other villagers were at once arrested. They have since been in prison, first at Hassan Kalé and subsequently at Erzeroum, where they will remain until his Excellency the Vali's attention is diverted to some new mare's nest. Active search is being made for the Stamboulee.

Meanwhile, the case is a peculiarly hard one, particularly for the priest, an old man of 80 years of age, whose health cannot fail to suffer from the hardships of prison life in such severe weather, and the ill-treatment he receives from the Mussulman prisoners.

This is only an isolated instance of the recklessness with which the Vali, whose hobby is the discovery of plots, throws people into prison on the most ridiculous charges. Once in prison here, it is exceedingly difficult for even an innocent man, not possessed of means, to get out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 41.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 115.)

Foreign Office, April 11, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 129 of the 27th ultimo, forwarding copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout on the subject of the trial of, and sentences passed on, the Christians arrested in connection with the recent riots at that place; and I have to request that you will inform Mr. Eldridge that his proposal to call the attention of the new Vali to these proceedings, and suggest that they should be revised, is approved.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 42.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 42. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, April 20, 1888.

MY despatch to your Lordship No. 130 of 30th March, and your Lordship to me No. 97 of 29th March: Armenian grievances and alleged Armenian conspiracy.

I am told that the Sultan has received from London a list of young Armenians who are said to be thoroughly under Mr. Hagopian, and who intend returning to Turkey as teachers. I hear that orders have been issued to have them arrested on landing and have them exiled to Africa, where six young men have been quite lately sent from here.

Your Lordship will know best whether any warning can be prudently given these parties without causing suspicion and inconvenience.

No. 43.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 21.)

(No. 144. Confidential.)

Constantinople, April 10, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship a copy of a despatch received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, dated the 31st ultimo, on the subject of the recent disputes in regard to the Holy Places between Greeks and Latins.

Previous to the Crimean War similar claims and counter-claims brought on estrangement between France and Russia; but in the present instance I notice that the French Embassy is so desirous to court Russian friendship and favour that one need not have any apprehension of any difference between the two nations arising from such a cause.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 43.

Consul Moore to Sir W. White.

Jerusalem, March 31, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Latins and Greeks are retaliating on each other in regard to matters connected with the Holy Places in a manner which will probably end in a serious collision between them. As usual at the Easter season, Jerusalem is now crowded with pilgrims of both sects—a circumstance which increases the chances, as it would the gravity, of such a conflict.

The French Ambassador not having succeeded in obtaining from the Porte an order for the removal of the Greek cross referred to in my despatch of the 10th January last, he has, it is understood, demanded as compensation certain concessions the nature of which is not yet known. The Latins, however, have not awaited the result of these negotiations. Working clandestinely from a chapel of theirs abutting on the Grotto of the Nativity at Bethlehem, they have tunnelled through the rock a passage into the Grotto, which gives them free access thereto without the necessity, as heretofore, of passing over Greek property on their way thither. The ownership of the Grotto is common to both communities.

To this the Greeks have responded by fitting new frames to certain pictures in a chapel of theirs in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This not having been done in previous agreement with them, the Latins look upon the act, equally with the erection of the Greek cross above referred to, as a further violation of the *status quo*, which, as your Excellency is aware, is the established rule with regard to all matters and questions connected with the Holy Places.

The Latins declare that they will retaliate by making some innovation on their side.

Both as regards this matter and that of the tunnel at Bethlehem there have been reciprocal protestations, and complaints to Constantinople.

The relations between the French Consul and the Governor of Jerusalem are of the

most strained description, the Consul openly accusing Raouf Pasha of bad faith and interested partiality to the Greeks.

The Russian Consul is naturally supposed to be supporting and encouraging the Greeks in all these proceedings.

The dispute about the stable at Bethlehem, reported in my despatch of the 7th January, 1887, still remains unsettled; but Turkish sentinels bar access or appropriation to either party.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 44.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 21.)

(No. 145.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 10, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 114 of the 16th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, giving a deplorable account of the distress prevailing in the district of Khanoos.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 44.

Mr. Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Erzeroum, March* 24, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Excellency the translation of a letter addressed to the Rev. W. Chambers, Erzeroum, by the pastor and three members of the Protestant community in the district of Khanoos, twenty-two hours from here.

The distress which is the subject of the inclosed letter is not confined to the Protestants, but is generally felt throughout the whole district. Its cause is not so much the dearth of grain, for last year's harvest, though not first-class, was still not very much below the average, as the fact that the agricultural classes have no money wherewith to buy it. For the last three years the tithes and surplus produce have been bought up by a number of comparatively rich men, in the expectation of a rise in prices; and these men (Christians for the most part, I am sorry to say) will rather see their fellow-creatures die of famine than give up a piastre of their anticipated profit. Last spring the great majority of the population had already disposed of their crops in payment of old debts even before the seed was sown, and, consequently, have not now the means of preparing for the coming season. This is where the shoe pinches most; for, now that spring approaches, they will probably be able to keep body and soul together for a time by eating grass and roots, as they have had to do before. But, if no seed can be obtained, the outlook for next winter is indeed gloomy.

The distress of the inhabitants would be alleviated to a certain extent were the Imperial Government to remit the taxes for the present year in the district in question, and thus not expose them to additional sufferings from the brutality of the tax-gatherers. This would be a cheap act of charity, as in any case there is no money with which to pay the taxes.

Great scarcity is also said to exist in the district of Alashkird, but concerning this I have no precise information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 44.

Letter addressed to the Rev. W. Chambers.

(Translation.) *Khanoos, March* 8, 1888.

LET it be known to you, that the great majority of the Protestants of this district are in great want, and burdened with heavy debts. To-day there are many who have

no bread whatever; some have a little bread, but no clothing to protect themselves from the cold, nor have they cattle or any other goods to sell in exchange for food.

There are some who have been living on charity for the last two months, and often pass several days without a morsel of food. In the hope that you may be able to find some means of assistance and relief for the more unfortunate of our brethren, we appeal to you in behalf of the following, viz.: 7 houses in Heramik, comprising about 50 souls; 3 houses in Chevermeh, comprising 20 souls; and 4 houses in Elpis and Kozloo, comprising about 25 souls; in all, 14 houses and some 95 souls who are in the greatest distress to-day. Of the remainder of the community a part has bread sufficient to last till spring, and a part sufficient to last till harvest; but there is not one who has food and seed for the coming spring.

Under these circumstances, we cannot consider it any shame to appeal to you, in the hope that a way of assistance may be found for the above-mentioned unfortunates.

(Signed) (Rev.) BOGHOS KARAHADIAN.
ARAKEL OHANNESSIAN.
GARABED MURADIAN.
MELCHON GARABEDIAN.

No. 45.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 21.)

(No. 146.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 10, 1888.

THE "Revue de l'Orient" has published *in extenso* a speech recently delivered in France on the subject of French interests in the East by M. Paul Deschanel, Deputy for Eure-et-Loire.

M. Deschanel points out, after dealing with the anti-French policy followed by Germany in the East, that England is also engaged in Syria in struggling against French influence, in the same way as in Asia Minor she combats Russia's policy.

In support of the charge of England's anti-French proceedings, M. Deschanel enlarges upon our "school propaganda;" upon the "rôle de la diplomatie Anglaise" in 1840 and 1860; upon "the proceedings of Midhat Pasha and Rustem Pasha when governing the Lebanon, both of these functionaries being English 'protégés;'" upon Sir Henry Layard's "solemn" progress through Syria; and upon the constant inspection by British officers of the coasts of Asia Minor.

Recent British "projects" are also touched upon—the erection of a new English Bishopric at Damascus, the second Suez Canal, the Palestine Canal, the Euphrates Valley Railway, &c.—which all indicate the same purpose, namely, that of establishing British influence on the east bank of the Suez Canal in the same manner as it now stands upon the west, &c.

M. Deschanel alludes in eulogistic terms to the Sultan, who, according to the orator, is fully aware of the importance of spreading through his Empire French views, French commerce, French civilization, &c.; all the more so because French policy in the East is purely humanitarian and absolutely disinterested.

I would not have troubled your Lordship with these quotations from a French Deputy's speech were it not that considerable importance has been given to it here; that a translation, of a part of it at any rate, has been laid before His Majesty the Sultan at the instigation of the French Ambassador; and that the orator has received in return for it the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Osmanié.

Your Lordship may gather from these proceedings how difficult it is for an English Ambassador to co-operate in important questions with a colleague who allows himself to be inveigled into an unfair attack in the highest quarters against a friendly country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 46.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 21.)

(No. 147.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 10, 1888.

IN continuation of what I had the honour to report to your Lordship in my despatch No. 119 of the 18th ultimo, on the subject of the efforts made by me informally

to obtain the removal of Kupelian Effendi from his post in the Lebanon, I have the honour to state as follows.

On the 4th instant Sir Alfred Sandison reported to me that the Grand Vizier had told him, for my information, that his Highness is "actually in communication with the Minister of Justice with a view to get Kupelian Effendi transferred to some judicial appointment at Constantinople."

This was confirmed to me by the Grand Vizier when I had the honour of seeing his Highness yesterday.

I have informed Mr. Consul-General Eldridge of this.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 47.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 21.)

(No. 155.) *Constantinople, April* 16, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt, by Messenger Captain Player, of two despatches from your Lordship, marked Nos. 97 and 101, dated the 29th March and the 4th April, 1888, and inclosing copies of Memorials addressed to your Lordship by certain Armenians residing in London, and calling upon me to draw up a Report on the statements contained in them.

The memorialists refer to matters which affect the execution of the Treaty of Berlin, and on this point your Lordship, in your reply to them, dated the 27th March, has very justly observed that without the co-operation of the other Signatory Powers our representations on the subject would not be effective. I may perhaps be allowed to add, as my personal conviction, that they would be likely to be even injurious by their very fruitlessness.

My despatch No. 130 of the 30th ultimo, on the subject of Armenians, must have crossed on the way with these instructions of your Lordship's, and I could only repeat here what I stated in it as to the delicacy and difficulty of approaching this subject.

The numerous statements of the memorialists go over so much ground, and the means of testing their accuracy at my disposal are so limited, that I must beg of your Lordship for time before I can report upon them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 48.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 21.)

(No. 159.) *Constantinople, April* 17, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 130 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum reporting the further arrest of eight Armenians upon political charges.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 48.

Mr. Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Erzeroum, April 4, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that arrests on political charges continue to be the order of the day in this Consular district.

Last week a young Armenian belonging to the Protestant school here set out for Pakraitch, twelve hours the other side of Erzinjian, where he was to act as pupil-teacher. He was accompanied by two brothers, Protestant doctors of Kharpoot, who had been passing part of the winter at Erzeroum. The party reached Erzinjian on Friday last, the 30th ultimo, and were at once visited by the police. Their luggage was subjected to a thorough search, which resulted in all three being thrown into prison on the charge

of having seditious literature in their possession. I have made inquiries at the school here, and am told that the pupil-teacher had with him some songs in manuscript celebrating the glories of ancient Armenia, and (possibly) a Map of the country before the Turkish conquest, but nothing else. I have no information as to the nature of the doctors' books, but it is not likely that they had anything really objectionable.

Until now Protestant Armenians, like the Catholics, have been treated with special favour by the Turkish authorities, as it is well known that they are regarded with great dislike by the Gregorians, and hardly considered by them as Armenians at all, while alone their numbers are too small for them to be taken into account. They have, besides, nothing to gain by any possible change in the administration of the country. The only explanation which I can give for this attack on them is that a pretext is being sought for closing the Protestant school. Mr. Chambers has already been warned that a descent is intended on the school here, and the Erzinjian police were evidently on the look-out for the arrival of the pupil-teacher, of whose departure from Erzeroum they had probably been advised by telegraph. The Vali does not attempt to conceal his opinion as to the harm done by the spread of education.

Mr. Boyajian informs me of a further arrest of three Armenian Protestants at Kharpoot on the charge of "sedition." Nothing being found to support the charge, they have just been let out on bail after an imprisonment of forty days, but not without considerable expense.

At Mardin a young Armenian watchmaker has been arrested and imprisoned for sedition, the only ground for the charge being that he had in his house some Armenian national songs.

Another arrest has been that of an Armenian priest, a Russian subject, who was sent under escort to Constantinople, it being alleged that he was propagating seditious opinions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 49.

Mr. Hagopian to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received April* 23.)

My Lord Marquis, 25, *Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, April* 23, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship, by request of the Committee of the Armenian Patriotic Association, the inclosed appeal to the Government and people of Great Britain forwarded to me from Van in Armenia. The original document is written in Armenian, and dated the 31st January, 1888. It was received by me on the 7th instant. I know the party through whom it has been sent as an educated and honourable man, who assures me that it emanates from an unimpeachable source, and himself bears witness to the intolerable state of things in Armenia. The document is not signed through terror.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN,
Chairman of the Armenian Patriotic Association.

Inclosure in No. 49.

THE CRY OF ARMENIA.

To G. Hagopian, Esq., London,

IT is wellknown that by the LXIst Article of the Treaty drawn up and signed by the Berlin Congress there is a special obligation imposed upon the Turkish Government to ameliorate the condition of its Christian subjects, and to introduce in their country indispensable reforms.

Although the Turkish Government oppressed its subject nationalities before the signature of that Treaty, it occasionally exhibited humanity and pity towards them. After the signature of that Treaty it allevinted for a time its oppressions, doubtless out of deference to the Great Powers of Europe, who had undertaken the duty of supervising it. Its deference was much greater towards the mighty Empire of Great Britain, who had by her Cyprus Convention confirmed and marked the obligations which Turkey had undertaken, and guaranteed their execution before the world. But when years elapse, and

not a single European Power, nor even Great Britain, interests itself in the amelioration of the condition of the unfortunate Christians of the East, not only does not the Turkish Government carry out a single one of its promises as regards the Christians, it not only deprives them of many religious immunities granted by Firmans issued by former Sultans of good memory, but with renewed boldness it intensifies its oppressions, without pity and without fear, deceiving all Europe and even Great Britain.

The Christians of the East put their trust on the humanity of the Christians of the West, but, alas, they always remain disappointed and abandoned. For instance, nobody asks what is the condition of the Armenian nation, that historic people who has a glorious past, and who has from the beginning stood up as a warm champion of civilization and Christianity, especially in the period of the Crusaders.

War, the fall of monetary values, famine, and commercial stagnation have already reduced the Armenian people to the last degree of poverty, so that it can scarcely obtain its daily sustenance. But the Turkish Government, instead of adopting measures to capitalize the inexhaustible treasures buried under its territories and improving the poverty-stricken condition of its subjects, loads the people with new taxes, and collects them by cruel means. Each Armenian village is obliged, notwithstanding its extreme poverty, to provide food, almost daily, for the numerous tax-gathering officials, who in return behave themselves towards the inhabitants with unheard-of inhumanity. The Armenian peasant is by degrees subjected to such land laws and such heavy taxes that, unable to withstand them any longer, is obliged either to sell his oxen and plough, his house and fields, and depart, or to go to distant provinces in quest of work and be never able to return, or to emigrate in a body, or taking hold of the hands of his young children go from door to door and beg. Thanks to this policy many of the southern and eastern districts of Vashouragard (Province of Van) are nearly depopulated of the Christian element and its place taken by Kurds, Turks, Yezidis, &c.

Even the educational expenses of the Turkish people are provided out of the taxes paid by the Armenians, because the Government, under the pretext of opening schools common for all its subjects, has made an addition to the existing heavy taxes, but the grant is at present limited to Mahommedan schools. In this way the richest Turk gets a free education for his children, whilst the Armenian is already accustomed to make pecuniary sacrifices. Yet this was not enough, and instead of establishing schools and opening before us the path of progress, the Government raises stupendous obstacles, closes many of our schools, and exercises severe and unnecessary pressure.

Just as in the eyes of Turkey the Armenian is a slave and bond-servant, the Kurd is always regarded as its legitimate and beloved son. For the Kurd there is neither law nor taxes, nor constraint, nor even regular military service. Now, it is precisely for this reason that this predatory and barbarous people has become so emboldened that it devastates, robs, kills, and burns, and yet always remains unpunished; and when any opposition is offered, the Government wears out the life of the self-defending innocent people by confining them in prisons for years together as rebels and murderers.

Very often numberless robberies and terrible outrages take place, but the Government is wilfully blind and deaf, because these are for the most part perpetrated by its own officials. Forced marriages, forced conversions to Mahommedanism and other thousand and one irregularities are always and everywhere common. But who is it that hears, and who is it that stretches forth the hand of mercy? In one word, civil rights, justice, order, and tranquillity have as it were bidden their last farewell and departed from the land of the Armenians subject to Turkey.

Corruption reigns supreme among the officials, without distinction, from the highest to the lowest, and has become a law. Every official, even the Governor himself, obtains his office from the Central Government only by large bribes. These consider it their duty not to devote their attention to make the country prosperous and orderly, but to rob and impoverish the people, and with the fruit of its labour to fill up their own purses: in fine, after shearing the sheep, they endeavour to suck its blood also. It is for this reason that all sorts of irregularities are freely perpetrated, but the Government always closes its eyes.

Litigations are prolonged in the various Courts, and for long spaces of time remain undecided, for the purpose of obtaining bribes from the litigants, and often an unjust judgment is given in favour of the party which has given the largest bribe. Woe to him who should dare to protest against the injustice done! That is considered a crime, and is punished by imprisonment for life, or by perpetual exile. It is absolutely forbidden to draw up public Memorials. The mouth of the press is gagged to such an extent that it can publish nothing except flatteries. Consequently, every irregularity remains hidden.

The following have been added to our intolerable griefs and sufferings:—

The Turkish Government seems to feel a special pleasure in discovering new methods of oppressing the people. The houses of numerous individuals are searched, owing to entirely unfounded suspicions, for finding the traces of revolt. Detractors and calumniators are rewarded with honours and offices. Many young men are exiled for indefinite periods, and their defenceless and helpless families fall into dreadful wretchedness. The prisons are filled by numberless Armenians (many of whom are clergymen), all of them arrested for groundless reasons. Whose heart can stand the hearing or seeing of the excruciating sufferings to which these unhappy people are causelessly subjected? Some of them have been kept more than forty hours without food and water; their hands, feet, and necks in chains, extended in cruciform on the wall, in a dark, cold, damp, underground cell. What a barbarous inhumanity, what an unheard-of dishonour to the holy Christian religion? If they had been left a few hours longer crucified in that manner, those unhappy young men (one of whom was a clergyman) would have doubtless drawn their last breath, because they were already exhausted, paralyzed, and insensible when, under the supposition that they were dead, they were taken down. These, with many others, are even now being worn out in the prisons without protection, and in misery, deprived even of the means of religious consolation and comfort. Their families, in despair of receiving human pity and justice, have placed their hope in the goodness of the Almighty.

The duty of searching the houses is intrusted to a hair-brained and brutal Chief of the Police, who, harbouring a special vengeance and hatred against the Armenians, has found an excellent opportunity to wreak his entire personal rancour, and to relegate numerous innocent individuals to undeserved misery, and, in the course of his searches, to perpetrate various thefts and robberies.

Who can curb his rising indignation at seeing this official, without a conscience, on the occasion of his searches in our celebrated Monastery of Varaka, taking up with his impure hands and casting on the ground crosses, Gospels, and a number of sacred relics centuries old, and even proceeding to demolish the altar in the sanctuary in the hope of finding arms buried underneath?

The Armenian people, deprived of all its rights, seek in their holy religion their true consolation; but when they behold their religion treated with so much cruelty and contempt, it is impossible for them to stand it any longer. . . . .

This is a brief sketch of our condition, which is becoming worse day by day.

What we have written* scarcely forms a hundredth part of the miseries borne by the Armenian people.

Shall Great Britain keep silent any longer? Will she not restrain the hands of this arbitrary Government, who, following the example of the Northern Bear, surpasses it in its despotic and subtle policy?

The Christian people of Armenia, like an innocent and defenceless lamb delivered to the fury of a hungry wolf, having put its trust in the mercy of God, and in the assistance of its Christian brethren in the West, is waiting impatiently. What shall be our lot, and what shall our reins give birth to. . . . .?

O, ye children of Great Albion, what would you have done or felt had you been in the place of the unhappy people of Armenia? Would you not have stretched out your trembling hands towards the humane and asked for pity? Now it is unhappy Armenia, who, for the love of the man-loving Crucified, and in the name of Christian pity, cries for help at the feet of your glorious Empire.

The Armenian nation has the right of claiming great things from Great Britain, for it has seen that she has, in many parts of the world, stood forth as the powerful champion of the down-trodden Christians. Indeed, great is our hope that this our cry will not remain without an echo in your hearts, and that the humane Government of England will not delay in extending her helping hand and saving the unhappy people of Armenia from this miserable and intolerable state.

Van, January 19 (31), 1888.

No. 50.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 25.)

(No. 153.)

Constantinople, April 16, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Smyrna, giving a most deplorable account of the state

* This can be ascertained from the English Consuls.

of public security in that town, which Mr. Dennis characterizes as a reign of terror, and describes as being in a more lamentable condition now than at any time during his residence at Smyrna.

I have instructed Sir A. Sandison, unofficially, to call the attention of the Grand Vizier to this state of affairs, and to intimate to him that should a British subject share the same fate as M. Amiro, Her Majesty's Government would hold the Turkish authorities responsible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 50.

Consul Dennis to Sir W. White.

Smyrna, April 14, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the state of public security at Smyrna has of late been very far from satisfactory. Never, indeed, during my long tenure of office here, has the public safety been so seriously imperilled, and the police proved so inefficient as at present.

For the last month or more crimes against the person have been of frequent occurrence, some of them attended with murder or attempts at murder, in a few cases, perhaps, the consequence of jealousy or rivalry, but in the greater number instigated by more sordid motives.

A novel method, for Smyrna at least, has recently been adopted, of attempting to extort money by means of letters threatening death in case of non-compliance with the demand. On Saturday, the 24th March, a wealthy Greek merchant named Amiro was murdered by daylight in the street near his own house, in consequence of refusing to respond to a letter threatening him with certain assassination if he failed to pay £ T. 100 to a "Band of Seven." Instead of complying, Amiro sent the letter to a local paper, which published it. The letter demanded that he should carry on his person the sum of £ T. 100 in gold, to be handed to the first man who might ask him for it. If he failed to do this he would drive them to commit a great crime, and would be immediately assassinated. The writer stated that the band of seven to which he belonged were closely pursued by Government, intimating that they were notorious brigands.

In a second letter, the demand was increased to £ T. 125, the addition being a fine on M. Amiro for having taken a guard from Government, for not having kept their communication secret, and for having published it in the newspapers. And they called on him to contradict the publication, and declare it to have been only a jest from some friends, and threatened him again with death, and his family also, in case of non-compliance.

For some time M. Amiro went out as usual, always attended by a guard, but on the fatal Saturday he was accompanied only by his nephew, when suddenly he was accosted by a man who demanded the 125 liras. M. Amiro pretended not to understand, but was instantly stabbed and fell to the earth. His nephew, coming to his assistance, was also stabbed. The elder man died on the spot; the nephew's wound has not proved fatal, but he is still kept in terror of assassination. On last Sunday, as he was sitting with his family in his drawing-room, a hand passed through the open window and dropped a letter in the room, threatening him and his family with death if the sum demanded of his uncle was not forthcoming.

Since the murder of M. Amiro not a few other persons have received letters demanding money under similar threats in case of non-compliance. In particular, M. Baylozian, a wealthy Armenian merchant, and President of the Chamber of Commerce, received on the 5th April a letter signed by the band of seven, demanding the payment of 240*l.*, which he was to place in a drum fig-box, and to deliver to the man who would be sent for it within four days. He communicated the letter at once to the authorities, and took steps accordingly. Two days afterwards a Jew called at his house and demanded the fig-box. It was given to him, but without the desired contents, and the police followed him to the neighbourhood of the Konak, where he was arrested, and on being urged by the influential Jews and threatened by the police to confess who had sent him he led the way to a café, where he pointed out a young Greek, who was at once arrested as one of the band.

Another Armenian, M. Bakirjian, has also received a letter from the band, demanding 80*l.*, which he forthwith communicated to the authorities, and has no intention of paying the sum demanded.

M. Solari, a shopkeeper, received a letter demanding 50 medjidies, to be handed to a man who would wait for them on a bridge on the road to Bournabat. Instead of paying, he applied at once to the Government for permission to carry arms.

I have heard of other similar cases, but as I have not been able to verify them—as I have verified those above mentioned, through the agency of Mr. Vice-Consul Barnham—I forbear to cite them.

During this reign of terror, for such it may well be termed, and while brigands are well known to be again infesting the neighbourhood of Bournabat, the Defterdar, now acting as Governor, sends a Circular to the Consuls, translation of which I have the honour to inclose, requesting them to induce their co-nationalists to contribute to the maintenance of the "bekjees," or night-watchmen. These men have hitherto been engaged and paid by the inhabitants of the street or district, not by the Government, and remain on duty all night, receiving from the several householders a small remuneration, not exceeding a medjid a month. In this strange document the Defterdar acknowledges the utmost importance of maintaining the public peace and security, and the imperative duty of the Government to render the public security perfect; yet, taking credit for the success which has attended the organization of the police force, proceeds to beg money from the householders for the support of the "bekjees." That is, the Acting Governor now expects that the householders should hand over the sums hitherto paid by them to the "bekjees" themselves to the Municipality instead. The probable consequence of such a step would be that the money thus contributed, instead of maintaining the watchmen in efficiency, would remain in great part in the hands of the Municipality, or flow out so slowly and irregularly as to be of little service.

It is asserted, although it is not easy to determine with how much truth, for ugly official facts are seldom acknowledged, that although some 300 zaptiehs are allowed for Smyrna, and fifty or sixty commissaries and agents of police, yet that the force has been gradually reduced of late, till it now contains barely half that number. The reason of this reduction, I am credibly informed, is that there is not sufficient money in the hands of the local authorities to maintain the force in a state of efficiency, payment being now some months in arrear, and this fact doubtless accounts for the begging letter of the Defterdar. Another cause of the inefficiency of the police force is, that it is now mainly composed of the immigrants from Bulgaria and Roumelia, who can be paid at a lower rate than native and resident Smyrniotes, but who must necessarily, as new comers, be less efficient.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEO. DENNIS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 50.

Kadri Bey to Consul Dennis.

(Translation.)

April 3, 1888.

Sir,

IN all, and especially in large countries inhabited by many foreigners, the strict management of the administration is the imperative duty of the Government, and to this end extraordinary and unprecedented attention is paid.

The local Government, in accordance with the requirements of a place of the standing of Smyrna, are endeavouring to perfect its administration and security, and are now seeking, in the discipline and proper regulation of the body of watchmen ("bekjees"), the success which has attended the organization of the police force. A sufficient number of watchmen have been appointed for each quarter of the town; two months since they entered on their duties, and the result has proved extremely beneficial.

This being so, should the shopkeepers, merchants, and householders grudge the small amount to be given for the monthly pay of these men, the administration will certainly suffer, and I therefore appeal to British subjects in an unofficial manner for their aid and assistance as regards their duty in this matter. The preservation of the public peace and security being of the utmost importance, I trust you will lend your assistance in order that the wages of the watchmen be duly paid to the collectors of the Municipality.

I have, &c.
(Signed) KADRI,
Acting Governor-General and Defterdar.

No. 51.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received May 5.*)

(No. 165.)

Constantinople, April 24, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 148 of the 10th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch addressed to me by Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus reporting the arrival of the new Vali and the removal of the French Consul to Cairo.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 51.

Consul Dickson to Sir W. White.

Damascus, April 11, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 28th ultimo, reporting the death of his Excellency Nashid Pasha, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that Nazif Pasha, the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Aidin, has been appointed Vali of Syria, and that his Excellency arrived at Damascus on the 7th instant. The Firman of His Majesty the Sultan, confirming his Excellency in his new post, was read with much ceremony at noon on the 9th instant, after which his Excellency received the visits of the military officials, the ecclesiastical dignitaries, and the Consular Body.

My French colleague, M. Péretié, has been removed by order of his Government to Cairo, as a sequence to the dismissal of the late Vali, the question of the violation of the French Consulate having apparently been adjusted at Constantinople, without the necessity of an inquiry on the part of the Delegates appointed by the French and Ottoman Governments. Riza Bey, the Ottoman Representative, did not come to Damascus, but M. Imbert, the French Delegate, visited this city privately, and, it is stated, with the object of investigating certain cases of disputed protection.

M. Guillois, French Consul at Cairo, has been appointed to succeed M. Péretié, and is daily expected to arrive at Damascus.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

P.S. *April* 13.—M. Guillois arrived here last night.

J. D.

No. 52.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received May 5.*)

(No. 166. Secret.)

Constantinople, April 26, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the accompanying copy of a Report laid before me ten days ago by Sir Alfred Sandison with reference to the Armenian Memorandum presented to your Lordship by Mr. Hagopian and his Committee in London, and the conversation Sir Alfred had on the subject with the Grand Vizier.

The subject, as your Lordship is well aware, is one of extreme delicacy, and had attracted my serious attention long before Mr. Hagopian addressed your Lordship publicly, and as far back as the month of January. I have endeavoured to impress both the Grand Vizier and the Minister of Foreign Affairs with its great importance, and the advisability of avoiding acts looking like arbitrary proceedings and irritating a population hitherto docile and laborious, and amongst whom revolutionary principles were not likely to find access unless they were driven to desperation.

But I cannot conceal from your Lordship that in this, like in most political matters, the Sultan's Ministers have no initiative or real authority, especially in all those connected with conspiracies, real or alleged; His Imperial Majesty invariably takes these into his own hands, resents interference, and works with his own instruments, frequently not the most trustworthy ones.

In the present instance I have, by acting with great caution, got so far as to induce the Grand Vizier to mention to his Sovereign a conversation I had had previously with his Highness on the subject of Mr. Hagopian's Memorial and its Appendix, and I must now wait patiently to see whether I am able to produce any impression.

Amongst the Armenians I find, what I have always found amongst oppressed nationalities, there are those who take a calmer view of things, who are satisfied with the removal of more crying evils and gradual reforms, endeavouring to keep on good terms with the ruling Power, whilst the others, *i.e.*, the younger generation of men, invariably belong to those who are impatient and by their rash proceedings bring on, on their race, more evils, and more cruel ones, than those from which they are trying to escape.

The Armenian Patriarch, who is about to resign the Headship of the Gregorian Armenians, was a representative of the former class of persons amongst them; it remains to be seen what will be the result of the next election to that high office.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Memorandum by Sir A. Sandison.

(Confidential.)

ON my asking the Grand Vizier to-day, unofficially, to put your Excellency in a position to answer the facts enumerated in the Memorandum which I placed in his hands privately on Saturday last, his Highness began by saying that he was still waiting for some information on the subject, although he could supply you with proofs that the arrests of the Armenians mentioned in the Memorandum chiefly rested on substantiated charges.

His Highness then went on to say that if your Excellency would view the matter in its true light you will soon perceive that everything combined to show that Russia was the principal actress throughout the play, with the secret object of bringing about a recurrence of what she so well succeeded in effecting in Roumelia and Bulgaria before the breaking out of the last war.

That she is resorting, in this instance, to the very means that she had then employed, viz., the formation of secret political Committees, the publication of seditious papers, and the employment of active agents who encourage the Armenians in political offences in view of causing thereby arrests and other consequent severe measures calculated to excite irritation and secure sympathy in England in favour of their cause.

The complaints contained in the Memorandum, added his Highness, had no reference to anything like administrative abuses or misrule, and far less to molestation on the part of Kurds or Circassians, but that they exclusively proceeded from arrests, for political offences for which the Government found a ready justification in view of preventing by exile and imprisonment the spread of seditious ideas and propensities which the Porte justly considers might lead to consequences of the most serious nature as regards the future tranquillity and perhaps even the preservation of its Asiatic provinces.

I could not help observing to the Grand Vizier that, even admitting the charges in question to be true, a good deal had certainly to be said as to the manner in which they had been brought forward, and more especially as to the manner in which the accused and suspected had been dealt with till now. It may be well to add that I was fully confirmed in this view by an Armenian of very high standing, in whom I have full confidence, and who, in spite of his loyalty and attachment to the Turkish Government, bitterly complained of the arbitrary, illegal, and unjust way in which the examination and trial of the accused and suspected Armenians had been conducted both at Constantinople and in the provinces. Even the outward forms of justice, he observed, had in many instances been utterly disregarded, and various persons sent into exile without anybody knowing precisely how and for what reason.

Whilst he greatly disapproved, however, he added, of the proceedings of the erring Armenians, who, in his opinion, deserved punishment after some sort of trial, he could not understand, on the other hand, how certain people in authority can show any disposition to listen for a moment to sweeping accusations against the Armenian

nation at large, coming, as they do, from a spiteful renegade of Shappaz Effendi's character and antecedents.

This, he concluded, was becoming much too strong even for his own feelings, and there was therefore no saying how far the Armenians in general would submit to a similar state of things, which could only end by leading, at no distant period, to exasperation and disaffection amongst them.

(Signed) A. SANDISON.

Pera, April 17, 1888.

No. 53.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 5.)

(No. 182.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 30, 1888.

THE Sultan sent me a message on Saturday evening to say that His Imperial Majesty would receive me in private audience on the following day at 12·30 P.M.

I repaired, therefore, to the Palace yesterday, Sunday, the 29th instant, and had the honour of being received by His Imperial Majesty, and my audience lasted upwards of an hour.

The Sultan inquired with particular interest about the Queen's journey home and Her Majesty's stay at Charlottenburg, and it was evident that His Majesty felt the greatest admiration for our Queen, and the warmest interest for the Emperor and Empress of Germany.

The conversation was for some time of a general and most gracious kind, without having any special political character, until the Sultan came to speak of the Armenian question, and alluded to my conversation with the Grand Vizier on the subject, to which your Lordship will find a reference in my despatch No. 166 of the 26th instant, marked Secret.

The Sultan said that all that had happened was caused exclusively by the acts of certain wild and evil-disposed persons, who were now suffering punishment for it, whilst the Armenian nation was guiltless, and could neither be suspected nor incriminated of disloyalty.

His Majesty assured me that he only disliked persons without any religion, but respected all religious convictions alike, and as a proof of this named several Armenians of my acquaintance who enjoy his confidence and occupy high posts of trust.

He then explained to me that the Armenians, his subjects, could be divided into three sections: those who wished to constitute an independent country, but those were extremely few; more of them were looking forward to annexation to Russia, but the large mass were perfectly loyal.

As regards those who had been lately discovered as engaged in a conspiracy, the Sultan said that the evidence against them was so conclusive as to have assured their condemnation to far greater penalties in Great Britain or even in the United States of America, and this evidence had been properly sifted and inquired into by a Commission selected by himself, who possessed his confidence and sat at the Palace.

Your Lordship may perhaps remember that I reported on the appointment and composition of this very Commission in my despatch No. 43 of the 4th February, marked Confidential.

Here came the important point of His Majesty's conversation, and the one for which this audience had been granted me unsolicited.

The Sultan stated that it was his intention to send two of the principal Pashas who had sat on this Commission, viz., Dervish Pasha and Djemil Pasha, to myself and to the other Ambassadors, with a view to submit a summary of the proceedings, together with documentary evidence of great importance, showing the treasonable purposes of the persons who had been punished.

On my suggestion as to the importance of employing the Armenian Patriarch in matters concerning his nation, and as to the value of having a proper person in that exalted station, His Imperial Majesty expressed a hope that the actual one could be induced to continue his tenure of office.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 54.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 15.)

My Lord Marquis, *Lambeth Palace, May* 14, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a letter from M. Hagopian, which, as your Lordship will see, I am requested to lay before Her Majesty. All that it is proper for me to do is, of course, to send it to your Lordship.

M. Hagopian, as your Lordship is probably aware, is an Armenian of high character and position resident in London.

I cannot refrain from adding that if, as I suppose, the statements made in the Memorial can be substantiated, the matter seems to be one of real moment, calculated to awaken deep sympathy among Christian communities in England as well as abroad.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDW. CANTUAR.

Inclosure in No. 54.

The Armenian Patriotic Association to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

My Lord Archbishop, 25, *Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, April* 26, 1888.

WE are requested by the Committee of the Armenian Patriotic Association to forward to your Grace the inclosed appeal from Armenia to the Government and Christian people of Great Britain. The Committee would consider it as a great favour to themselves and to the people of Armenia if your Grace would, after reading the appeal, submit it, or a copy of the same, to Her Most Excellent Majesty the Queen.

We have, &c.

(On behalf of the Committee),

(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN, *Chairman.*

M. SEVASLY, *Secretary, Licencié en Droit.*

No. 55.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 19.)

(No. 189.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 7, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 159 of the 17th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the arrest of some Armenians.

Mr. Wratislaw, however, adds that so far no flagrant act of injustice has occurred which demanded the interference of Her Majesty's Consulate.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 55.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Erzeroum, April 26, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the teacher of the Protestant School at Erzeroum was arrested on the 19th instant, and has since remained in prison. I have been pressed by the Messrs. Chambers to interfere with a view to obtaining his release, but the case does not as yet appear to me to be one in which the intervention of Her Majesty's Consulate is either necessary or justifiable. No flagrant act of injustice or oppression has been committed by the authorities, and the man has certainly done wrong from the Turkish point of view. The Messrs. Chambers are naturally anxious for his release, as the work of the school is at a standstill during the absence of its teacher.

An Armenian of Kharpoot, journeying from Trebizond, was arrested on his arrival at Erzeroum two days ago. It is asserted that he is a Russian spy.

All travellers entering the town are examined by police agents specially stationed at each gate for that purpose.

To the best of my belief and information, the suspicions evidently entertained by the Turkish Government are entirely groundless, and its severity uncalled for. No movement of any kind is intended by the Armenians of this district, who have been effectually cowed by the ill-success of their abortive attempt at forming a Secret Society three years ago.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 56.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 19.)

(No. 192. Confidential.)
Constantinople, May 8, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 147 of the 10th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, containing remarks on the likelihood of Kupelian Effendi obtaining a judicial appointment, and his being thus removed from the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 56.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir W. White.

(Confidential.)
Beirut, April 30, 1888.

Sir,

I HAD the honour to receive your Excellency's despatch of the 5th ultimo, transmitting to me copy of an unsigned Petition from the inhabitants of the Lebanon, complaining of the corruption of Kupelian Effendi, and instructing me to call Wassa Pasha's attention to this matter, for the purpose of obtaining Kupelian's removal.

At the time of the receipt of your Excellency's despatch I was suffering an attack of fever, and unable to leave the house for some days; consequently, the communication to his Excellency was delayed, and about that time rumours were circulated that it was probable that Kupelian would not return to the Lebanon, as in writing to his friends he had ceased to mention the subject. I therefore thought it prudent to delay still further the communication I was charged to make to Wassa Pasha, and to await the course of events.

I have since had the honour to receive your Excellency's despatch of the 11th instant, informing me that the Grand Vizier had told you that his Highness was endeavouring to have Kupelian transferred to some judicial appointment at Constantinople, which I consider effectually disposes of him as far as the Lebanon is concerned, which was the object in view, as from my long experience of Kiamil Pasha I have always found him a man of his word.

The reason that the Petition was sent unsigned is obvious, as had Kupelian returned he would have undoubtedly wreaked severe vengeance on those who had had the temerity to sign it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 57.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 19.)

(No. 193.)
Constantinople, May 9, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 95 of the 2nd March, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting that in view of the bad state of public security in the Sandjak of Mardin, the

spiritual heads of the Christian community there have telegraphed to the Sublime Porte for protection, and that the Vali has sent two Commissioners to that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 57.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Erzeroum, March 15, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to M. Boyajian's Confidential Report of the 14th January, a copy of which was forwarded to your Excellency in my despatch of the 19th ultimo, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that the state of insecurity of the Sandjak of Mardin, to which attention was drawn in the above Report, appears to become worse and worse. So bad is it, that the spiritual heads of the Christian community in that district lately forwarded a telegraphic Petition to the Porte, stating that their co-religionists have no longer any security for life and property, and appealing to the Imperial Government for protection.

A copy of this Petition was also sent to the Vali of Diarbekir, who, on receipt of it, at once dispatched the Alai Bey and a member of the Medjliss to Mardin, to investigate and report upon the case.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 58.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 19.)

(No. 196.)
Constantinople, May 11, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 159 of the 17th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum on the subject of the arrest of an Armenian pupil teacher at a Protestant school on a charge of having in his possession certain songs of a seditious nature.

In this despatch Mr. Wratislaw asks for instructions as to what action he should take in case the school in question be closed by the Turkish authorities.

After consultation with my American colleague, the Honourable Oscar Straus, who takes a deep interest in all questions concerning educational establishments in this country, I have instructed Mr. Wratislaw not to resist for the present the closing of the school should the Turkish authorities determine upon such a course, as in view of the present state of things in Armenia any official action taken by Her Majesty's Embassy would undoubtedly arouse suspicion in the minds of the Turkish authorities.

I have informed Mr. Wratislaw that if the school be now closed it may be possible on some future occasion, when a favourable opportunity may present itself, to take steps towards obtaining the reopening of the school.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 58.

Mr. Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Erzeroum, April 19, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to the arrest at Erzinjian of a pupil of the Protestant school here, and two Kharpoot doctors, reported in my despatch to your Excellency of the 4th instant, I have the honour to give the following further details on the subject.

The two doctors have already been released, as nothing of an incriminating nature was found in their possession. It appears that they were only arrested on suspicion, as being strangers at Erzinjian.

The case of the pupil teacher, Simpat, is, however, serious, and seems likely to involve the Protestant school in grave difficulties. Not only was one of the songs

found on him, his own composition, of a rather violent character (it contains, amongst other things, the words "pitiless" and "religionless" applied to the Turks), but it is also corrected in a handwriting which the Armenian teacher of the Protestant school has had to recognize as his own. The school is thus made directly responsible for what it might otherwise have disavowed as being merely the private effusion of a foolish boy. The teacher has been called up to the Government House and interrogated several times during the past week, but, much to the general astonishment, has not yet been arrested. He was informed yesterday that the papers connected with the case are to be sent to Constantinople by to-day's post.

Thus the authorities are evidently taking a serious view of the matter, and I am strongly of opinion that this last step is only the prelude to the closing of the school. The school building is American property, and I beg respectfully to request your Excellency to instruct me as to what course I should pursue in such an eventuality. As your Excellency is doubtless aware, "Protestant" and "English" are considered as almost synonymous terms in these parts, and the closing of the school would be generally looked on as a direct defiance to British influence. This idea is here strengthened by the fact that the Messrs. Chambers are themselves British subjects, and as such continually receive assistance from the British Consulate.

The school is besides a most useful institution, and in general exceedingly well conducted, though there has certainly been a lack of care and proper supervision on the present occasion.

I should add that Simpat, though for several years a pupil of the Protestant school, is himself a Gregorian.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 59.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 201. Confidential.)
Constantinople, May 16, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE nothing new to report with regard to the Armenian grievances brought before your Lordship by M. Hagopian and his friends residing in London. I have not received either from the Palace or from the Sublime Porte the information which had been promised me, so as to enable me to place before your Lordship the official version as to the facts alleged by M. Hagopian in his Memorandum.

The Patriarch of the Gregorian Armenians, who wanted to resign, has resumed his duties out of deference to the personal wishes of His Majesty the Sultan.

It is to be hoped that his Beatitude, who is the natural Representative and Ecclesiastical Chief of his nation, will be able to remove successfully the existing tension, and restore mutual confidence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 60.

The Marquis of Salisbury to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

(Confidential.)
Foreign Office, May 21, 1888.

My Lord Archbishop,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Grace's letter of the 14th instant, calling my attention to a communication which you had received from M. Hagopian respecting the condition of Armenia.

I have already received this document, together with other Memorials on the same subject, from the Committee of Armenian Residents in London, and I have informed M. Hagopian that the papers will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople with instructions to report upon the statements of fact contained in them, in order that Her Majesty's Government may be enabled to judge whether any of them can properly and usefully be laid before the Turkish Ministers. But I pointed out to him at the same time that in a matter which affects the proper execution of the Treaty of Berlin, it can scarcely be hoped that the advice and representations of Great

Britain alone will be effective unless the other Governments parties to that Treaty are disposed to join.

Sir W. White has since reported that the statements forwarded to him go over so much ground, and that the means of testing their accuracy at his disposal are so limited, that he must ask for time before he can report upon them.

In view, however, of the existing situation in the East, it is not, in my opinion, desirable, in the interest of the Armenians themselves, that this question should be agitated at present.

I should add, for your confidential information, that some caution is necessary in corresponding with M. Hagopian, as he usually gives publicity to the replies which he receives.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 61.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 156.)
Foreign Office, May 24, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 196 of the 11th instant, inclosing copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum relative to the arrest of an Armenian pupil-teacher at a Protestant school at that place, and the fears entertained that the school may be closed by order of the Turkish authorities.

The instructions sent by your Excellency to Mr. Wratislaw on the subject are approved.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 62.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 2.)

(No. 219.)
Constantinople, May 28, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 189 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from Mr. Acting Consul Wratislaw, reporting the arrest and subsequent release of three Protestants at Erzinjan, and also commenting on some arrests at Kharpoot.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 62.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Erzeroum, May 14, 1888.

Sir,

SINCE the date of my last Report to your Excellency, three Protestant Armenians have been arrested on suspicion at Erzinjan. None of them were, however, detained in custody more than twenty-four hours, and their speedy release has occasioned much comment at Erzinjan, where it is attributed to foreign protection.

Several pupils of the Protestant school here were arrested a few days ago at the gate of the town as they were going for a walk. They were searched for "seditious" documents, but none being found on them, were at once released. The teacher of the school is still in prison, no decision having yet been arrived at in his case.

Mr. Boyajian reports that several persons have lately been arrested and imprisoned at Kharpoot on political charges, but were able to procure their release on bail within a few days. The judicial authorities of Kharpoot appear to be making a regular traffic of these arrests and releases.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 63.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 2.)

(No. 221. Secret.)

Constantinople, May 28, 1888.

My Lord,

I CANNOT say that my mind is by any means easy on the subject of the Asiatic Provinces of the Ottoman Empire known by the name of Armenia, or at other times as Kurdistan.

No new facts have come to my knowledge since I had last the honour of addressing your Lordship concerning the Armenians, and still I feel that this question may at any moment assume an unpleasant character.

The information promised me by the highest authority on the subject of the alleged Armenian conspiracy has not yet come to hand, possibly on account of the Ramazan fast; but I have felt compelled to make a respectful and delicate reminder through the Minister of Foreign Affairs—and this quite informally.

There has been, and there still exists, a secret agitation amongst Armenians, and there have been measures of repression such as domiciliary visits, arrests, and persons sent into exile. Whether this repression was the result of the agitation or, *vice versâ*, the latter caused by the former, it is impossible to ascertain; but the publication issued by certain Armenians domiciled in London and Paris have not any tendency to allay either, quite the contrary, they evidently cause an increase of the existing irritation both with the Armenians and their Moslem rulers.

I am afraid that no advantage could be derived at present by any advice I could give the latter, and I cannot make out what purpose the former mean to attain by encouraging the present agitation. I observe, however, that discontent is growing even amongst Armenians residing at Constantinople and occupying good positions, and this I must admit looks ominous.

Amongst some patriotic Turkish Pashas I likewise notice symptoms of increasing anxiety on account of the provinces conterminous with Russia, and I have availed myself of this feeling to point out to some of them the danger of pushing Armenians to a condition of despair as to obtaining some improvement for people of their own race under the Sultan's sceptre.

A great deal is made amongst them of the reported relaxations in the system of governing Armenians in the Caucasus, and the freedom enjoyed in their schools, &c. All this appears new to me and requires confirmation; but even as a rumour which is being persisted in, it points to a desire in some unknown quarter to keep up this agitation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 64.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 2.)

(No. 207.)

Constantinople, May 21, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 153 of the 16th ultimo, in which I transmitted a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Smyrna, reporting on the state of insecurity of that town, I have now the honour to transmit a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Smyrna, in which Mr. Barnham states that the Chief of the "Band of Seven" was shot by the police on the 18th instant.

This happy termination to a disreputable career appears to have been mainly brought about by the energy displayed by the Greek Vice-Consul.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Acting Consul Barnham to Sir W. White.

Smyrna, May 19, 1888.

Sir,

I AM happy to inform your Excellency that Frangiola, the Chief of the "Band of Seven," was shot by the police in the streets of Smyrna yesterday morning.

Since the 14th April, the date of Mr. Dennis' despatch reporting the existence of the band and the assassination of Mr. Amiro, many persons have received threatening letters demanding large sums of money, of which particulars were from time to time published in the "Levant Herald." As, however, some letters had been received which proved to have originated in a practical joke, I thought it better not to trouble your Excellency with frequent reports on the subject, especially as there was every reason to admire the prudence and energy with which the new Governor-General and the Defterdar have acted, and to believe that official action on the part of the foreign authorities would do more harm than good.

About three weeks ago Dr. Boulgaris, a physician of standing in this city, received a packet containing a letter addressed to a gentleman named Misto, in which letter were found cheques addressed to fourteen well-known Greek gentlemen of Smyrna, signed by the "Band of Seven," and calling upon them to pay the amounts stated thereon to Misto, who was ordered to collect the amount and hand over part to a Dr. Alexandroff, part to a certain Hadji Andon, and to retain part upon his own person, each being responsible for the amount intrusted to him until it should be called for. This programme was so extraordinary that the affair was generally regarded as a joke.

On Tuesday last Misto received a second letter, threatening him with death if he did not carry out the orders he had received.

As most of the gentlemen who were threatened were Hellenic subjects, the Greek Consulate has taken an active part in the discovery of the band. The detection and death of Frangiola is, however, directly due to the energetic action of the Greek Vice-Consul, who, having received information that Frangiola frequented a house in the Armenian quarter, placed spies near the spot. When the man was seen to approach the house early yesterday morning he was called upon to surrender; but as he replied by firing upon the police, he was at once shot down. Papers were found upon his person bearing the names of people from whom he had demanded money, and one stamped with the seal of the "Seven."

There is no doubt that Frangiola was the murderer of the unfortunate Mr. Amiro. He has had many imitators, but they have mostly been detected, and are now in prison. I will not trouble your Excellency with their exploits.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 65.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 227.)

Therapia, June 5, 1888.

My Lord,

IN obedience to the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 115 of the 11th April, I informed Mr. Eldridge that your Lordship had approved of his proposal to call the attention of the new Vali to the trial of and sentence passed on the Christians arrested in connection with the recent riots at Beirut.

I have now received a despatch from Mr. Eldridge, copy of which is herewith inclosed, in which he states that Ali Pasha refuses to interfere in the action of his predecessor.

I do not therefore propose to take any further action in this matter unless instructed by your Lordship to do so, as matters have quieted down, and I doubt any good resulting from advice of this kind so long after the event.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 65.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir W. White.

Beirut, May 22, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Excellency's despatch of the 23rd ultimo on the subject of the trial of and sentences passed on the Christians in connection with the riot which took place on the 5th February last at Beirut, and informing me that the Marquis of Salisbury approved of my proposal to call the attention of the new Vali of Beirut to these proceedings, suggesting that they should be revised.

At the first private interview I had with Ali Pasha I explained to him the whole affair, as I understood it, pointing out that I considered a great injustice had been committed and the Christians were unfairly treated. His Excellency said that from my point of view it appeared strict justice had not been meted out to all parties impartially; but as the occurrence took place before his arrival and the accused sent to Damascus for trial, it would not become him to interfere in the matter or with the action of his predecessor, an argument which, in spite of all my endeavours, I could not overcome, although we discussed the subject on two occasions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. J. ELDRIDGE.

No. 66.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 16.)

(No. 228.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June* 5, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 196 of the 11th ultimo on the subject of the arrest of the Protestant teacher at Erzeroum, I have the honour to inclose a copy of a further despatch I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum.

Mr. Wratislaw further reports that an Armenian priest and three laymen at Erzingian have been condemned to exile for life.

The priest Hirlef, whose imprisonment I reported in my despatch No. 130 of the 30th March, is now, Mr. Wratislaw reports, only confined to the fortress of Hassan Kalé, but that his fellow villagers are still in prison.

Mr. Wratislaw, in conclusion, states that the proposed emigration of Armenians to Russia has been vetoed by the Porte, and no passports are now given for passing the Russian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 66.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Erzeroum, May* 24, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 11th instant on the subject of the possible closing of the Turkish authorities of the Protestant school at Erzeroum.

The case of the teacher, Siklimian, and the pupil, Simpat, is still under consideration at Constantinople, but I hear that a telegram was this week received from the Porte inquiring the names of the officials engaged in investigating it, and intimating that their zeal will be suitably recognized by the Government.

An Armenian priest and three laymen, arrested some time ago at Erzingian on the charge of having seditious documents, *i.e.*, national songs, in their possession, have been condemned by the local Court to exile for life. The sentence has this week been laid before the Erzeroum Court of Appeal for ratification.

The priest of Hirtef, whose case was reported to your Excellency in my despatch of the 2nd March, is no longer actually in prison, but is detained within the precincts of the Fortress of Hassan Kalé. The Armenian Bishop here tells me that his case can now be arranged for £ T. 30, so he will probably be set at liberty before very long. The other natives of Hirtef who were arrested on the same charge are, I understand, still in custody, pending the arrest of the Stamboul Armenian referred to in the above despatch, who is still at large.

With reference to the proposed emigration to Russia of a number of Armenians from this district (referred to in my Confidential Report to your Excellency of the 22nd February), I am informed that the matter has been allowed to drop, at any rate for the time being, as the Porte has absolutely refused to hear of anything of the sort. Indeed, the local authorities now refuse to grant passports allowing persons to cross the Russian frontier, thereby causing considerable loss and inconvenience, as at this season native cattle merchants are accustomed to make extensive purchases of sheep, &c., in the Russian markets. I hear that the Russian Consulate has remonstrated against this action, but in vain.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 67.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 23.)

(No. 241.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June* 19, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 192 of the 8th May, in which I reported that Kupelian Effendi was about to be provided with a post elsewhere than in the Lebanon, I have the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirut, from which it appears that some fear still exists lest he should return there. I consequently instructed Sir A. Sandison to see the Grand Vizier on the subject, and from the inclosed Memorandum your Lordship will perceive that the Grand Vizier assured him that, for the present at any rate, there was no danger of his being allowed to return.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 67.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Beyrout, June* 4, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 30th ultimo relative to the corruption practised by Kupelian Effendi in Mount Lebanon, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that during the last few days I have seen several of the Notables of the Lebanon of various denominations who all express, in various terms, the same sentiment, viz., that since the departure of Kupelian the mountain has been "resting" from his exactions.

There is, however, still a feeling of uneasiness amongst all classes that he may yet return, as he still continues to draw his salary from the Lebanon Treasury, and there is no announcement that he has been appointed to a post elsewhere, or dismissed the service, as he ought to be.

As far as my information goes, I am convinced that there is not a single individual in the whole district who desires to see him back again, except, perhaps, one or two who, acting as his jackals, shared, to a certain extent, in the spoils.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. J. ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 67.

Memorandum by Sir A. Sandison.

I HAVE the honour to report, that in obedience to your Excellency's instructions, I did not fail to lay in a strong light before the Grand Vizier the inexpediency connected with Kupelian's return to Syria, adding that in presence of the instructions received from Her Majesty's Government and the statement he had made some months ago, to the effect that Kupelian Effendi would be provided with a post at Constantinople, any departure now from this understanding would lend to remonstrance and strong representations from the British and French Embassies.

His Highness stated, in reply, that, notwithstanding M. Kupelian's importunities, there will be no danger of his being allowed to return to Syria in a hurry.

June 17, 1888.

No. 68.

Mr. Fane to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 257.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 3, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, inclosing a Memorandum by Mr. Vice-Consul Eyres respecting the administration of Southern Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND FANE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 68.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir W. White.

Beyrout, June 15, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a very interesting Memorandum furnished to me by Mr. Vice-Consul Eyres relative to the administration of the country from observations made by him during his journeys in the south of Syria, and especially in the district of Acre, which I venture to recommend to your Excellency's consideration.

It is now several years since I visited that part of Syria, and, according to Mr. Eyres' Memorandum, the state of affairs does not appear to have improved so far as the administration is concerned, but rather to have retrograded, and it forms a striking contrast with Beyrout and the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. J. ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 68.

Memorandum by Vice-Consul Eyres on the Condition of Acre District.

HAVING made three journeys into the Sandjak of Acre during the last two years, I found myself in a position to make certain observations which may be of interest to Her Majesty's Government. My journeys were always hurried, and most of the time at my disposal was taken up by the special work for which I was sent; consequently, I was not able to inquire as fully as I wished into the state of the country.

One of the most noticeable points on leaving Beyrout is the entire absence of the varnish of civilization which exists in that town, whether as regards social life or as regards the Government. In Beyrout the presence of large numbers of Europeans and the Consuls of all the European Powers has a distinctly civilizing effect on the Government officials, who dare not act arbitrarily or with open injustice for fear of the prompt exposure which will follow such deeds; but in Saïda and in most towns in the interior there is no such restraining influence, the result of which is that, as far the Government is concerned, one might imagine one had suddenly been plunged into the most barbarous and out-of-the-way districts of Asia Minor. At Sidon it is true there are Vice-Consuls, but they have not much influence, and the Kaïmakams act much as they choose. The Christians are not united, and are therefore unable to oppose a firm front to oppression and exaction, whereas the Moslems combine together heart and soul, and, by the force of union added to the favour of the local government, are enabled to carry everything their own way. The Moslems of Saïda are, indeed, of the most fanatical in Syria. They consider, it is said, the town of Saïda as a second Mecca, and they wish and hope that it may be established on that model. The officials are entirely Moslems, except in those posts which are reserved by the law for Christians, and most of them are natives of Saïda. The rest, who are Turks and Syrian Moslems, follow the lead of their colleagues, and make a show of being equally fanatical. The Kaïmakams are frequently changed, and should an honest man be appointed (a rare occurrence) matters for the time improve, but, as a rule, they are dominated by the native Moslems. The Christians are in a considerable minority; the whole population is about 9,000 to 10,000, of which not more than a quarter are Christians. The consequence of this state of things can be easily imagined. The administration is hopelessly corrupt, and Christians find it impossible to obtain justice except by personal influence or pecuniary inducements. The greatest difficulties are placed in the way of foreign subjects who hold land, and a vexatious system of incessant interference is adopted by the authorities, with the object, I presume, of making them give up in despair and sell their possessions. Foreign subjects are recognized as such when it is disadvantageous to them, but when the contrary would be the case, it is only after much delay and continual applications to Beyrout that the local authorities are pleased to concede the fact. Directly the officials are changed the business recommences. The Governor of Beyrout, whether he be a Wali or a Moutessariff, appears to have very little power of making his orders obeyed outside this town, and the amount of ingenuity expended in explaining away a plain order and putting some other construction upon it is astounding.

The present Kaïmakam of Sidon, Hassan Bey, is a man of weak intellect, but of a most corrupt and arbitrary disposition. He owes his appointment, which was

strenuously opposed by the late Nashid Pasha, to the influence of his father, Kiazim Pasha, and an official who possessed many good qualities, Ihsan Bey, was displaced to make room for him.

Hassan Bey arrived without notice at Sidon, and for some little time there were two Governors in the town, the Wali supporting Ihsan Bey, while Hassan Bey held a Firman from the Sultan. The latter was eventually successful, to the great chagrin of Nashid Pasha.

Tyre is the very opposite of Saïda in every respect. It is a quiet little town, from which a complaint is scarcely ever heard. The Christians are united, and live in amity with the Moslems, who do not attempt an opposition, which they know would fail.

Acre and Caiffa, being directly under the supervision of Mr. Vice-Consul Schmidt, I do not propose to discuss, more especially as my stay has always been too short to enable me to obtain an insight into the position of local affairs.

At Tiberias the Kaïmakam is a Christian, Selim Melki Effendi by name. He is a fairly honest, well-intentioned man, but is afraid of the extremely ignorant and fanatical Moslem officials by whom he is surrounded. The latter, as a rule, go their own way without reference to the Governor, whom they despise. The various Heads of Departments no longer look upon the Kaïmakam as the person from whom they are to take their orders; he is simply a channel of communication, and they reply to his written communications generally to the effect that they must refer to their superiors in the sandjak or in the vilayet centre. The Courts of Justice are absolutely independent according to law, but besides these, the Census official (Tahriri Nufuss Memouri), and the Tapou official, consider themselves independent also, and take their orders from Acre. Consequently, it is impossible, in any disputed case, to obtain satisfaction on the spot; the Kaïmakam has one set of orders and the various officials others, while the vilayet, if appealed to, declares that one or other is in the wrong, but takes no steps to right it, and permits this duplicate system of Government to continue, with the result (agreeable no doubt to the higher authorities) that it is next door to impossible to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion of any business.

The district of Tiberias is, however, quiet, and I heard no complaints of outrages or of misbehaviour on the part of the police. Progress has been made with a road to Nazareth and Caiffa, and steps have been taken to rebuild certain portions of the fine old buildings which cover the hot mineral springs at half-an-hour's distance from the town. A large sum was collected sufficient for the total rebuilding of these baths, but after the visit of a high personage the greater part of the money disappeared, and the works were restricted to repairing ruinous portions of the edifice.

Safed is the worst governed town and district that I have visited in Syria. It was almost incredible to me that such a state of things could exist within 70 or 80 miles of Beyrout. The Kaïmakam is of the great Shehab family, a Moslem; he is a plausible man and speaks well, but is a treacherous, corrupt, and arbitrary miscreant. These are strong words, but are no less than the truth. Under his government the Mussulman, Jewish, and Christian population suffer great oppression from exactions, and from the high-handed and illegal proceedings of the police. No complaint against any official is listened to, and it is impossible to check the rapacity of the zaptiehs; or to obtain justice against them even when they commit the most abominable crimes. The members of the Courts are crassly ignorant, and have no conception of their duties. The Jews and Christians naturally suffer most, but the Moslems also are not exempt. In the case of foreign subjects not a semblance of legality is observed; their houses are entered, and they are dragged off to prison often without hearing any accusation. They are punished without trial, and harder measure is dealt out to them because they claim foreign protection. The only answer to Consular protests is, that no foreign subjects are recognized whose certificates are not countersigned by the Sublime Porte, and in this reply the Governor is supported by his superiors.

In the streets of the town Europeans are continually insulted, and Jews are frequently maltreated. The district is not safe, and no efforts are made to punish roving marauders.

Communication, except by telegram, is difficult with Safed, as the post goes round by Caiffa, and orders from superior authorities are often not carried into effect, there being no one whose interest it is to see to their execution.

Even the Post Office is not exempt from the prevailing maladministration, and the Postmaster, the Emir Kaisar Shehab, stops letters, newspapers, and telegrams if he has a grudge against the person who is to receive or send them.

In conclusion, I may add that I would urge the necessity of the dismissal of the Kaïmakams of Safed and Sidon as a salutary lesson; but it is not very probable that the condition of these districts would be permanently ameliorated by such action, unless the Governor-General can be brought to exercise an efficient control over his subordinates in outlying places.

It appears to me, therefore, that the only possible remedy for this state of things is continual exposure and protest, so as to force the hand of the superior powers; but so long as the question of the recognition of certificates of nationality is unsettled, it will be impossible, in towns which are at a distance from a Consular residence, to compel the local authorities to act fairly or legally with regard to foreign subjects.

(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

Beyrout, June 7, 1888.

No. 69.

Mr. Fane to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 261.)

Therapia, July 10, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the reappearance of the Russian brigand, Kerim, and outrages committed by Kurds near Erzeroum.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND FANE.

Inclosure in No. 69.

Acting Consul Wratislaw to Sir W. White.

Erzeroum, June 25, 1888.

Sir,

I REGRET to have to report to your Excellency the reappearance in this district of the notorious Russian brigand, Kerim. The authorities of this town were informed last week of his presence, with five followers, at a village in the Caza of Passim, about ten hours from Erzeroum, and fifty cavalrymen were at once sent to capture him, under the command of a certain Captain Mirza Bey, who has been so often unsuccessfully employed on the same service as to be popularly supposed to have long ago arrived at a complete and friendly understanding with Kerim. This detachment succeeded in surrounding the brigands, who, however, appear to have subsequently made their escape with the greatest of ease.

Near the village of Tatos, nine hours from Erzeroum, some members of the Hassananli tribe of Kurds last week waylaid four Circassian cattle merchants returning to Moush after selling their beasts in the market here. Three of the Circassians were murdered, and the fourth severely wounded. None of the Kurds have been arrested.

Several minor outrages have been committed by Kurds during the present month, and although, till lately, the district has been unusually free from brigandage, this temporary immunity is probably only due to the prolonged wet weather and the consequent bad state of the roads.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 70.

Mr. Fane to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 262.)

Therapia, July 10, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting generally on the state of affairs in that district, and stating that much discontent had of late existed among the troops.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND FANE.

Inclosure in No. 70.

Consul Dickson to Sir W. White.

Damascus, June 25, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that Nazif Pasha, the Governor-General of this province, left Damascus on the 18th instant for Homs and Hamah, in order to superintend the farming of the tithes, and that the "Muavin" ("Adjoint du Vali") has also proceeded to Baalbec for the same purpose. It is expected that their Excellencies will be absent nearly a month; and as the crops have been very abundant this year, it is considered that the yield to the local Treasury from the tithes will be very favourable.

The Hadj caravan started from Damascus for Mecca, with the usual official ceremony, on the 14th instant, and has been joined by about 400 or 500 Persian pilgrims and other Asiatics. The total number of pilgrims, however, of all nationalities, was not large, as many preferred to proceed to the holy places by sea.

The Feast of the Baïram passed off very quietly, but much discontent seems to have been felt among the troops in consequence of their not having received the payment on account of their arrears of salary which is usually made on such occasions, and it is reported that an animated discussion on the subject took place between the Commander-in-chief and the Governor-General, the latter declining to sanction an advance from the local Treasury. The Mushir eventually negotiated a loan of £ T. 3,000 with the Ottoman Bank on his own personal guarantee, and was accordingly able to distribute a certain sum among the troops, who were thus satisfied. This incident, however, has, during the last few days, been a subject of general comment in Damascus.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 71.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received August 2, 4·5 P.M.)

(No. 61.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, August 2, 1888, 1·55 P.M.*

GRAND VIZIER contradicts the assertion that the Porte intends bringing Circassians and settling them about Van. His Highness admits, however, that a certain number of Mussulmans from Russian Daghestan have emigrated into Turkish territory.

I have instructed our Consuls to report to me, and have called their attention to this, which ought to have been noticed by them.

No. 72.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 3.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Cross, forwards herewith, for the information of the Marquis of Salisbury, copy of a Memorandum by Colonel Bell on railway construction in Asiatic Turkey.

India Office, August 2, 1888.

Inclosure in No. 72.

Memorandum by Colonel Bell.

Quartermaster-General,

IN bringing to your notice the opinions of Sir W. White on the subject of the primary importance to us not only politically, but strategically, of Turkish railways in Asia, I need only remark that they coincide with the results of a study made in this Office of the trade and military communication requirements of Turkey in Asia, on the termination of a reconnaissance of parts of Asia Minor, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, and Azarbaijan carried out in 1885-86.

I hope in two months' time to place before you the details of this study: in the

meantime, for the subject under consideration it may suffice to recapitulate the results arrived at, which are that—

1. The commercial and strategical railways required in Turkey in Asia are naturally identical, commerce being the best pioneer to pave the way for possible military contingencies.

2. The most important commercial and strategic lines required to develop the resources of Turkey in Asia and to enable her to defend her Armenian frontier, and, to admit of a Western ally aiding her in that defence, if advisable or necessary, are—

A trunk line from Sakandarun* viâ the Bailan Pass, Antioch, and Aleppo to Birejik on the Euphrates, and thence through northern Mesopotamia, past Mardin, Jazirah, and Mosul to Bagdad. This line connects the Mediterranean Sea and Persian Gulf, traverses a country of great agricultural fertility, skirts hills of considerable mineral wealth, and connects the commercial and strategic centres of Aleppo, Diarbekr, and Mosul, necessary respectively to the defence of Syria, Armenia, and Kurdistan, and for their commercial development.

The reasons for the selection of Sakandarun* as the railway port are not entered into here. They are weighty; a coast connection with the Mersine-Adana line is desirable; there is no reason why it should not become a healthy port; it is a good harbour and can be readily improved at a small cost, &c.

3. This line, based as stated on the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf, requires to be supplemented by one based on the Black Sea and connecting the commercial and strategic centres of Mesopotamia, &c., with those of Diarbekr, Kharput, Malatia, Sivas and Samsun, necessary also to the defence of Armenia and Anatolia and their commercial development.

The Black Sea terminus need be no source of danger to Turkey, if it be fortified and measures taken to defend and eventually destroy the line if necessary.

4. From this latter line, both for the defence and further development eastwards of Armenia and Kurdistan, a line is required which, starting from Sivas, should take a line through Erzighian and Erzeroum to the frontier, or from Kharput, viâ Mush, Bitlis, Van, to Kotur Pass; both are perhaps necessary strategically.

5. The study points to the military value of the positions occupied by Sivas in regard to Anatolia; of Diarbekir and its outposts, Kharput and Malatia in regard to Mesopotamia and the neighbourhoods of Missis and Aleppo in respect to the defence of Syria.

The lines of railway indicated, including these obligatory strategic points, enable the defence of Anatolia and Mesopotamia to be conducted on sound lines, and the initiative necessary for the defence of Armenia to be vigorously prosecuted.

This system of railways will also be to Britain of the utmost advantage if compelled to coerce Turkey. Such coercion need only result in Turkey's increased strength. The lines indicated give her the advantages of the through line from Scutari, whilst at the same time securing to her the best of bases at Sakandarun (overshadowed by Cyprus) and the Persian Gulf, and enable her to occupy, when desirable, the strategical centres necessary to the defence of Anatolia, Armenia, Kurdistan, and Mesopotamia, for these are reached by the lines from Diarbekir to Samsun and Van, based, as already stated, on a double base, i.e., the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf, on Britain and India, and if necessary, on the Black Sea, at Samsun as well; nor can they, in my opinion, be surpassed as commercial lines, uniting as they do the fertile areas of Sivas, Malatia, Kharput, Diarbekir, and the plateau of Armenia with the plains of Mesopotamia and the Aleppo Vilayat, and following as well the natural lines of communication indicated by the topographical features of the country.

They follow approximately the strategic cart-roads, in whole or in part constructed by the Turks, and their strategic value is known to them; a matter of moment facilitating the likelihood of a concession being granted for their construction on favourable terms.

With reference to proposition (3), I would remark that if the lines of railway are likely to result in great Imperial advantage—and I would urge that the advantages to Britain both commercially and strategically if Turkey in Asia be intersected by railroads designed to meet her Imperial requirements far exceed those likely to accrue to any other Power—it is worth spending on them Imperial funds under Turko-British guarantee, and that we should not expect to gain great advantages at too low a figure, but be prepared to pay for them their market value.

* Scanderoon (Alexandretta).

The deductions from the reconnaissance referred to, and here given, have been necessarily made on the assumptions that in the abstract it is right to prepare to meet possibilities, for few can predict what may or may not happen; that it is sound policy to strengthen the Turkish Empire in Asia by all the means in our power, and that to pave the way to eventually enable the Powers to introduce the long-delayed reforms necessary to the amelioration of the Armenian race is very desirable.

I have here purposely avoided entering into contention as to the relative values of the different lines proposed at various times by promoters of railway schemes and have stated conclusions only.

The details as already stated will be before you in two months' time in a form capable of ready reference. Here, I would only remark that no great stress is laid on the value of the Mediterranean-Persian Gulf line as a through military road to India. Its main importance rests on far wider considerations of Imperial policy, development to the trade and resources of Asia Minor, the defence of Armenia and Kurdistan, and through them of Syria and Constantinople, &c.

The only drawback to the lines proposed being assured commercial successes is the venality of Government officials throughout Turkey in Asia, *e.g.*, Pasha justice (!) Pasha venality; Pasha greed. The peasantry are thrifty and hardy, of fine physique; Turks, Armenians, Kurds, &c., by no means gone-by peoples.

But if these lines are to be of use to Britain in enabling her to aid Turkey to defend Asia Minor, money should be expended on them now and not at the eleventh hour, as one of their chief values lies in the commercial development of the country. Should there be but a remote probability of Armenia becoming a theatre of war for British troops, or troops acting in concert with them, the possibility of their being useful to Great Britain is a contingency worthy of being provided for.

It is a first importance that the Turks should now consider well the Armenian theatre of war, and place the 4th Army Corps—the frontier corps—on a satisfactory footing.

Leaving out of consideration the military necessity for one and of all these lines (the Mesopotamian as well as Anatolian and Armenian lines), to enable Turkey single-handed, or aided by allies, to defend her Asiatic possessions against Russia, and looking upon their bearings upon British trade alone, they must, I think, be considered necessary to enable England's commerce to compete favourably in the East with Russia's growing manufacturing and carrying powers.

Britain's Imperial position depends upon her continuing, as hitherto, to be the great carrier and supplier to the world at less rates than other competitors can afford to accept. Her commercial bundle is made up of a number of sticks some larger some smaller, but the smallest of them, such as Persia and Turkey, she cannot afford to lose, lest others shake loose and be lost to her, and these lead to the loss of others. If this be sound political economy, and it seems incontestable, Britain's object must be to keep her hold on all her present markets and customers, to further develop the former and increase the number of the latter, and to this end the Asia Minor railways are very necessary to her.

I do not further enlarge upon this here, although I would invite your attention to the gradual outward increasing commercial pressure that Russia is exerting along the whole of her Asiatic borders, whether in Persia, Afghanistan, or China, and to the steady manner in which her home and border railways are being systematically pushed to still further exercise this pressure, and which are likely, in years to come, to give her advantages over ourselves, whether as supplier or carrier to the East (including India), advantages which must seriously cripple British trade in all its branches and throughout its ramifications unless she counter-rail on a well designed system.

(Signed) M. S. BELL, *Colonel*,
Deputy Quartermaster-General, Intelligence Branch.

Simla, May 9, 1888.

No. 73.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received August* 10, 6·30 P.M.)

(No. 63.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, August* 10, 1888, 4·10 P.M.

SCHEMES for railways in Asiatic Turkey.

On the 25th July, 1887, I laid before your Lordship an exhaustive Memorandum on such Concessions, in which I argued on the inexpediency of Her Majesty's Embassy

giving support to any particular scheme of the kind without a thorough sifting of their respective merits at home.

Colonel Alt, who is here representing the Haidar Pasha Railway, and who has now connected himself with French financiers, and M. Collas (see my despatch No. 283 of the 21st July) tells me I am to be instructed by the Foreign Office to give support to his Syndicate. As there are now other offers, some from English, I venture to solicit your Lordship's special attention to the inexpediency of our acting in these matters without sufficient information as to the value of these rival schemes.

No. 74.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received by telegraph, August* 10.)

(No. 309. Confidential. Ext. 63.)

Therapia, August 10, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to state that negotiations have lately been very actively pursued in connection with the various Concessions for railways in Asia Minor.

Last year, on the 25th July, I had the honour of laying before your Lordship a somewhat lengthy private Memorandum on the various schemes which had been put forward, and I urged the necessity of Her Majesty's Government being prepared to support one particular scheme, and pointed out the disadvantage which would result from support being given to any one scheme without its merits being carefully inquired into in England before such support were given.

Colonel Alt, who represents the Haidar Pasha Railway, called upon me to-day and informed me that he was in a position to state that I should receive instructions by the messenger on Monday to support his Syndicate. That gentleman has now connected himself with French financiers and with M. Collas, the contractor for the Ottoman lighthouses, and this is a contingency that I foresaw when I addressed to your Lordship my despatch No. 283 of the 21st July. Colonel Alt is not the only Englishman who is competing for this Concession. Other British Companies have now put forward schemes, and I venture to submit to your Lordship the extreme importance of causing careful inquiries to be made into the merits of the various schemes and concessionnaires in England before I receive instructions to support any one group in particular.

I had the honour to forward the substance of the above remarks to your Lordship by telegraph to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 75.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received August* 11.)

(No. 307.)

Therapia, August 7, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 233 of the 25th ultimo, and to my telegraphic reply of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I at once directed Sir A. Sandison to make inquiries at the Porte as to the alleged intention of the Turkish Government to settle large bodies of Circassians amongst the Christian population in the neighbourhood of Van.

I have now the honour to inclose a copy of a Memorandum by that gentleman, stating, on the authority of the Grand Vizier and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Interior, that the Daghestanese referred to are Mahommedan Russian subjects, forced to quit their native country, and that the Porte finds itself reluctantly compelled to grant them hospitality in spite of the inconvenience it entails. It is proposed to assign them such waste lands and other State property as may be available in the Vilayets of Sivas, Trebizond, and Erzeroum, these being the districts in which they can be settled with least expense. They are stated to consist of about 400 families.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 75.

Memorandum.

I HAVE the honour to report, on the authority of the Grand Vizier, as well as of Said Pasha, and Munir Pasha, the Minister of the Interior, that the Circassians mentioned in Lord Salisbury's despatch are Mahommedan Russian subjects whom the Ministers described as "Daghestanlis," forced to quit their native country and emigrate to Turkey, much to the regret of the Government in view of the expense and inconvenience which their immigration will entail upon the Imperial Treasury. As, however, the Porte finds it difficult to refuse them hospitality, it is now proposed, according to Munir Pasha's statement to me yesterday, to assign them such available waste lands and other State property as are to be found for their settlement in the Vilayets of Sivas, Trebizond, and Erzeroum, these being the nearest provinces to the Russian frontier and Black Sea ports which could afford the immigrants land and shelter without occasioning great expense to the Government in the shape of transport, &c.

According to what I was told by Said Pasha and Munir Pasha they consist of about 400 families, and, as stated above, will be settled in different parts of the three vilayets in question.

(Signed) A. SANDISON.

Therapia, August 5, 1888.

No. 76.

Sir R. Morier to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received August* 11.)

(Separate.)

London, August 10, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE received the three letters which I inclose herewith from Mr. Hardinge, recording observations of various kinds made by him during a tour in Trans-Caucasia which I authorized him to make last spring.

Though of a private kind, they contain matter of sufficient interest to authorize me to communicate them to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. B. D. MORIER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 76.

Mr. A. Hardinge to Sir R. Morier.

Etchmiadzin Monastery, Government of Erivan,
April 21, 1888.

Dear Sir Robert,

I HAD meant to write to you from Tiflis, but my time there was so taken up that I was obliged to put it off.

I got there on the 15th (Sunday) evening. Herbert and I separated at Kharkhoff, and I stopped for a couple of days at Taganrog and Rostoff on Don.

I had intended going up to Novo-Tcherkask, but the badness of the roads, owing to the incessant rain, and the awkward railway arrangements, made me put off my trip to the Don Cossack territory till some more favourable opportunity arose. I heard a good deal, however, both at Taganrog and Rostoff, about the famous annexation of those two towns to the Cossack region. The object of the Government in incorporating them appears to have been a double one:—

1. To conciliate the Cossacks, who have undoubtedly been uncomfortable about the plans said to be maturing at head-quarters for the extinction of their peculiar institutions.

2. To place under closer and more efficient control two somewhat suspicious centres.

As you know, Rostoff and Taganrog were, so to speak, "libertics"—I mean they were politically united to, but geographically isolated from, the Government of Ekaterinoslav, from which they were separated by the intervening Don Cossack territory. The Governor of Ekaterinoslav and his superior, the Governor-General of Odessa, took, accordingly, little interest in towns lying far away from their borders, and this circumstance, combined with the existence there of a large floating labouring population (especially at Rostoff), made them nests of South Russian revolutionism. The police authorities, imperfectly checked by and out of

touch with their remote superiors, were exceptionally indulgent and corrupt; passport rules were very loosely applied, largely owing to the difficulty of enforcing them on a floating population—as they were practically frontier towns—people slipped in and out of the Don Cossack country and eluded the vigilance both of local and Cossack authorities.

The normal population of Rostoff is 90,000, but during the summer months, when the barges bringing the wheat for exportation come down the Don, they bring with them crowds of workmen seeking employment in connection with unloading and shipping operations, and the numbers rise from 90,000 to 120,000. This seething mob of labourers is, for Russia, very unmanageable. Last year, on the occasion of some frivolous dispute between a Turk and a Christian, they pillaged all the Turkish shops and houses, wrecked an hotel, overpowered the police, and kept up a state of riot, which was only put an end to by the arrival of a Cossack regiment from Novo-Tcherkask. Such a place appeared created as a happy hunting-ground for the Nihilists, and the discovery of a conspiracy at Taganrog, with wide ramifications, and the supposed connection of Cossack discontent with the existence of Nihilism at Rostoff, is said to have decided the authorities. I was told by the Jew manager of a large business house at Rostoff that several thousand suspicious political characters had been expelled from the town in the first three months of the present year, and although I detected my friend in one or two exaggerations, which make me hesitate to accept all his statements, there is no doubt, from all I heard then, that the police, since the union, have become exceptionally active. The first thing I noticed in my inn at Taganrog was a poster, stuck up in all the rooms, and bearing the signature of the Acting Ataman of the Cossacks. This poster reminded all keepers of, or visitors to, hotels of the penalties attaching to the possession or concealment of revolutionary literature, and of the obligation imposed on all residents to inform the police without delay of the arrival of any strangers at their houses. All this increase of severity, and the general character of Cossack rule, has made the union decidedly unpopular with the trading classes of Taganrog and Rostoff, though the few English merchants to whom I spoke seemed to think it would prove on the whole a good thing, as affording increased security for the maintenance of order.

With regard to the Don Cossack country proper I had to content myself with second-hand information. I had a good deal of talk on the subject with a young Englishman in trade at Rostoff, who has Cossack relations living at Tcherkask, and very often goes there to stay with them. Although obviously unwilling to say anything compromising, he told me that there was a great deal of discontent there, and that several of his Cossack friends had spoken openly of rebellion if any attempt were made by the Government to touch their privileges. As the whole of South-eastern Russia, from Rostoff to the Ural, is Cossack, a general rising of the Cossacks might, they seemed to think, be sufficiently serious to bring the Petersburgh Tchinovniks to reason. However, at present, from all I could hear, there is no sign of any anti-Cossack measures. Whatever may be the real designs of Prince Mirsky, whether he is really trying, as some suspect, to lull the Cossacks to sleep in order to strike more effectively at them, or not, he does his best to pose, at present, as the champion of their interests, and he appears to have won their good-will.

I will not trouble you with any account of my journey from Vladikavkas to Tiflis. The Georgian military road is a well-worn track about which there is nothing fresh to be said. I stopped a couple of days at Vladikavkas, and visited some of the Tartar and Cossack villages in the neighbourhood. These Cossacks belong to the Terek Army, but have improved in civilization since the days of Tolstoy's novel about them. The non-commissioned officer with whom I lunched on my expedition was an exceedingly civilized person, and, what is rare among the Cossacks, an Orthodox Russian Churchman. He had acquired at the military school at Stavropol a taste for music, and he played me several national tunes on the concertina. He knew, moreover, all about the English climate, and could descant quite learnedly on "its connection with the influence of the Gulf Stream."

My first care on the morning after my arrival at Tiflis was to array myself "en boutons métalliques," and pay my visit to his Excellency Prince Dondoukoff. He received me with the greatest cordiality, and at once began to inquire about my journey. When I said I was going to Etchmiadzin he said: "C'est bien, c'est bien; vous exploiterez le mécontentement des Arméniens. Faites, mon cher, je vous donne la plus pleine permission." I laughingly deprecated being assumed to be

a travelling revolutionist. "Allons donc," he said; "tout bon Anglais est révolutionnaire en Russie." I told him that if he absolutely insisted on my preaching insurrection, and would see that his police didn't arrest me by mistake, I would try to carry out his instructions, but that he must coach me up first in the causes of Armenian discontent. He laughed a good deal, talked about Wolff and his desire to be friendly with him, Ridgeway's article on the frontier, the folly of "les gens nerveux," and all the reasons that there were for our being friends and not foes, if we would only have the sense, on both sides, to understand it.

Then he took me over the Government Palace, and showed me, with evident pleasure, among his relics the pen with which Sir Fenwick Williams signed the capitulation of Kars, and the uniform of the Afghan Colonel killed at Penjdeh. He spoke very bitterly of his own Government, and of the way in which they had done their best to nullify his work. I suspect he is sore at Trans-Caspia having been taken out of his jurisdiction; you know he always took such an interest in it.

"I could settle matters," he said, "with every one else, with the natives here, with the Turks, with you English; but it is Petersburgh and the permanent officials that make me despair. Les Chancelleries et les paperasses—voilà ce qui tue! When I retire, which will be before many months are over, to my country house near Pskof, I mean to carve, as an inscription over my door, a saying taken from one of your English poets—

"When vice prevails,
The post of honour is a private station."

"Surely, Excellency," I said, "that is rather a severe reflection on your Government." "Well," he said, "perhaps you are right. Some of my friends thought so too. I dare say it will be best to restrain my feelings."

I was not long in hearing more about the Armenian grievances to which Prince Dondoukoff alluded. I was thrown a good deal among Armenians during my stay in Tiflis, and at Erivan I stayed with a M. Johanisian, an Armenian Professor, who had been educated in Germany. The discontent of the Armenians with the Russian Government has been growing steadily during the last five years, and has begun to spread from the "young Armenian party" (who are chiefly literary men with Western notions derived from study in the schools of Western Europe) to the mass of the population. The Armenians believe that the Russian Government is determined to stamp out the Armenian language, nationality, and religion, especially the latter, on which the other two chiefly depend. As usual, they have begun with the schools. In all the villages inhabited by Armenians there existed elementary schools connected with the Church, and voluntary secondary schools in the towns. These Armenian schools were shut up about four years ago by the Russian authorities, and although since the accession of the present Armenian Catholicos, who is a Russian nominee, they have some of them been allowed to reopen, this concession has been neutralized by a fresh blow, dealt only a few months back, in the shape of an order that in all gymnasia, or State secondary schools, all instruction, even religious instruction, must be given in Russian. Formerly, in the gymnasia, Armenian boys received their religious instruction in Armenian, partly because a very small minority of the Armenian priests know any other language, and partly because Armenian is to them a sacred language, like the Latin of the Vulgate to Roman Catholics, so that, to use any other for their services, or for the reading of the Scriptures, would appear to them an almost impious innovation. The whole of the clergy accordingly declared that they could only teach the faith in the traditional sacred tongue, and, as a consequence, for the last six months religious teaching has ceased altogether in the Government schools frequented by Armenians. All this is made additionally bitter by the fact that the Minister of Education is himself an Armenian; they speak of M. Delianoff almost exactly as the Fins do of Minister Braun, as a mere Petersburgh Tchinovnik, desirous only of courting favour in high quarters by being more Russian than the Russians themselves.

Another very sore subject is the action of Russia in connection with the appointment of the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin, the highest dignitary of the Armenian Church. The Catholicos is elected by the Armenians themselves; each of the Armenian Dioceses in Russia and Turkey sends two electors, viz., the Bishop and a lay representative, and in addition to them the monks of Etchmiadzin have between them seventeen votes. The total number of electors is (I think) 180, the great majority representing Turkish Dioceses. As, however, Etchmiadzin belongs

to Russia, the Czars claim the right of "confirming" the election before permitting the Catholicos to assume office; and as up till now they have always, as a matter of course, "confirmed" the candidate elected by the Synod, no objection has ever been made to the claim. Last time there were two candidates, the Armenian Bishop of Smyrna, and Macarius, the present Catholicos. The Bishop of Smyrna got an overwhelming majority of votes, the lay electors voting for him to a man; but he was not looked on with favour by the Russian authorities, partly because he was a Turkish subject, partly because he was regarded as the candidate of the "Progressist," or "young Armenian party." The Emperor accordingly overruled the decision of the Synod, and "confirmed" the defeated candidate as Catholicos. The latter is, I believe, unjustly called a Russophil; he is old and infirm, and only wants to avoid disputes with the Russian Government; and this makes him apt to give in where his people think he ought to be firm. The Russians, I am told, are well disposed towards him, and he is negotiating with them for the reopening of the Armenian schools.

The "Progressist party," discontented with Russia, and still more so with Turkey, profess to look for help to England as a "Western and Liberal Power," and in this they are encouraged by the interest which is taken in Armenia by a certain section of English politicians. The more imaginative dream of making their country —or at least the Turkish part of it—an "Asiatic Bulgaria," which, under the protection of England or Europe, should guard Turkey against Russian attacks on the Asiatic side, and they talk angrily of the folly of the Turks, whose oppression of the Armenians in Erzeroum and Van is such as to make even the yoke of Russia seem preferable. Others, more practical, discourage "premature aspirations" such as these, and would confine themselves, whether in Russia or Turkey, to keeping alive their distinctive national and religious consciousness by means of schools, institutions, and a literature of their own, so as to prepare and be ready for the distant, but (as they believe) certain, future which will restore to them their place among the nations. All are agreed in regarding the maintenance of the Armenian Church on the one hand, and the diffusion of Western culture on the other, as the best preservatives against Russification.

Of course these "Progressists" are all educated men, and I doubt whether their "aspirations" awaken any interest among the masses, but undoubtedly the attacks upon the schools and Church have caused a very widespread discontent throughout the country. Formerly, I was told, the name of the Czar was sure of an enthusiastic reception in any Armenian audience; the Armenians looked on Russia as their deliverer from the Turks, and gloried in the title of Russian subject. Now, however, all this is changed. "We see that the Russians are trying to do what the Turks with all their tyranny never did, to take away our nationality and religion." But what has evidently awakened the strongest feeling against Russia is the introduction of obligatory military service. The educated classes and the Progressists, indeed, are in its favour; they think it will improve the physique of the younger generation, give them that training the loss of which for so many centuries has tended to weaken and degrade the Armenian race, and implant in them a sense of self-respect and of equality with the Russians. Moreover, it appears to them a decided advantage that the Armenians should have arms put into their hands, and should know how to use them. But with the common people, who have none of these feelings, the new conscription is most unpopular, and, in spite of all the official reports (which, as you may remember, we sent home at the time) of the alacrity with which the population had responded to the call, it is a fact that petty risings took place in a great number of districts on the first attempt to enforce the new Law. At Sardacabad, near Etchmiadzin, the people stoned and beat the Natchalnik, at Erivan there was a regular riot, and in Karebagh the officers sent to draw the conscripts were attacked by the villagers. Throughout the country I heard complaints of the conscription from the peasants and middle class. "Why," said one man to me, a substantial, fat tradesman, who looked as though he would be all the better for a little compulsory exercise, "why should we fight for a country which isn't ours? We are not Russians, and they shall never make us Russian."

At present the native Christian troops recruited under the new Law only number 2,000. There are 700 Armenians at Erivan, and rather over 1,200 Georgians and Armenians together at Gori, in the western part of Trans-Caucasia. I was told that they were good shots, and much quicker than the Great or Little Russian "moujik" at learning their drill and other exercises. They wear a black

uniform and Astrakhan cap, something like the dress of the Russian police. I talked to one of the recruits, a young man of education, who seemed not only quite contented but even keen about the service.

I took the best part of two days getting from Tiflis to Erivan. From Tiflis one goes by rail along the Baku line to a place called Alestaffa, whence the Erivan road branches southward; thence one can post in a "tarantass." Our tarantass held three—myself, a Georgian priest, who was Parson of Igdir, a little town on the Turkish frontier, south-west of Erivan, and an Armenian commercial traveller, who was now touting for an American firm of the name of Clarke, and who had at one time acted as a colporteur for the Bible Society, but parted from them in disgust. The Georgian priest was a very decent fellow for his class; his living was not a very good one, being only worth, so he told me, 500 roubles a-year, plus perquisites for administering the Sacraments, praying for rain, &c., when wanted, not reporting nonconformists, and the rest; but these perquisities he said he generally got in kind, fowls, eggs, &c., a money present from a peasant family rarely exceeded a few copecks. The best livings in Trans-Caucasia do not rise above 800 roubles; all are in the gift of the Bishop. My friend quite agreed with me as to the desirability of altering the rule which confined all Bishoprics to the monks, and as to the objections to an hereditary priesthood, but pointed out, what I had not realized before, that the latter was an inevitable evil, owing to the fact that the schools for the clergy give a free education to priests' sons and thus naturally attract them, but require them to refund the expenses of their schooling if they enter any other profession but the Church. As they are too poor to do this, they have no alternative but to take Orders, and, as my friend said he had done, make the best of it. I talked to him a good deal about Dissent, of which Trans-Caucasia is full, especially the part of the country which we traversed. In fact, after leaving a little town called Delijan, where the roads to Erivan on the one hand and Alexandropol, Kars, and Turkey on the other separate, we entered a hilly tract, separating the valley of the Kura from that of the Araxes, which was entirely peopled by Molokan settlers, transplanted by the Government from Tambov and other Central Russian provinces.

Some of these Molokans were of the curious sect called "Subbotniki," or "Jiddi," who in their zeal for the literal interpretation of Scripture regard the Mosaic Ceremonial Law as still binding, abstain from pork, keep Saturday, and practise circumcision. We had a curious instance of the extent to which these Judaizing Molokans enforce their creed. At Eleuofka, a Molokan village where we stopped on the second morning of our journey, our tarantass was supposed to be that of the doctor, who had been sent for to examine a dead body, and a peasant was sent over to the post-house to show us the way. When the mistake transpired our peasant all of a sudden became very silent and embarrassed; my curiosity was aroused, and after several unsuccessful attempts to get at the truth I learnt from a young Tartar that the dead man had been murdered by the whole of the village with sticks and stones for some offence connected with the Law of Moses. One of our fellow-travellers afterwards informed me that this offence was adultery, which the Pentateuch punishes with death.

The planting of these Molokan colonies is another of the grievances of the Armenians. They say the Russian Government wishes to break up the compact character of the Armenian population, and to introduce a purely Russian wedge between the Armenians of Trans-Caucasia and those of Turkey, so as to prevent anything like a cohesive and continuous Armenia. All the country taken from Turkey, for example, at the end of the late war has been handed over to sectaries from Russia, who have no idea how to develop its resources, whose fanaticism makes them unpleasant neighbours, and whose only *raison d'être* is that they help the Russians "to divide and rule." I am bound to say, in justice to the Government, that the uplands assigned to the Molokans seemed a horrible region, with an inclement climate and a poor-looking soil. Their villages were an exact copy of those of Russia.

I should mention that before leaving Tiflis I took advantage of the necessity of getting a Turkish *visa* to my passport to pay a visit to the Turkish Consul-General, Hussi Bey, with whom I had a long conversation. He is a very emphatic and vivacious little man, and I should think extremely busy and wide-awake. He said he could not understand the indifference of our Government to what was passing in the Caucasus, as evinced by our not having a Consul at Tiflis. Peacock, at Batoum, though a most admirable man, and with a thorough knowledge of the country, was not in a position to obtain for us the information which we needed. As an instance

of how difficult it was to obtain such information, and how incessant must be the vigilance of an Agent who really wished to learn what was going on, he mentioned the revolt of the Tchetchenes of Daghestan last autumn in connection with the new conscription. The Mahommedans had not realized that they were to be exempted from service in return for a money payment, and they mistook for recruiting officers the Russian officials who came round to assess this exemption tax. Whole districts accordingly flew to arms, and it was necessary to send a large force (12,000 men) from Ekaterinodar (Cuban Cossack territory) into Daghestan to put down the rising. "I was at Ekaterinodar at the time," said Hassi Bey, "and I saw the troops starting for Daghestan, but in Russia, and even here at Tiflis, no one knew anything about it. My colleagues had not heard of it. Prince Dondoukoff and the Russian officials never alluded to it; had I not actually seen the troops march out, I should have been tempted to think that I had heard the news of the rising in a dream."

I pointed out to Hassi Bey that we might have some difficulties in getting the Russians to grant us a Consul at Tiflis, especially as, in the absence of British trade and British subjects, the appointment of one would seem avowedly political. He replied by the Oriental suggestion that we should first appoint a worthless native with the rank of Vice-Consul. The Russians would most likely agree to him, as they would think they could corrupt him, and it might even be worth while to allow him to reveal one or two unimportant secrets. After a time he could be promoted or shelved, and the principle of our having a Consular Agent having once been admitted, a trustworthy Englishman could be appointed.

We went on to talk of the feeling of the native populations towards Russia, and I asked Hassi Bey whether he thought that, supposing we had been forced into war at the time of the Penjdeh incident, we could have produced anything like a successful rising in Trans-Caucasia. "You might then," he said, "especially if supported by Turkey, but that game has been becoming more difficult every year. In another five years it will have become almost impossible. Russia is consolidating her power, the Circassians have been driven out, the Daghestan Mahommedans are gradually unlearning the arts of war, and degenerating into mere peaceful traders; the great Georgian Nobles, Christian and Mahommedan, have been attracted to Petersburgh by Court bribes, and encouraged to squander their fortunes; in this way they have become dependent on the Government, and have lost much of their old authority over their clans, which, in their turn, are being broken up by the substitution of a modern industrial for the old feudal state of society. The whole people is becoming completely demoralized; whatever cohesion once existed among them is melting away. Meanwhile, Russia, by her roads, her railways, her commerce, her settlers, is tightening her hold on the country every day. No doubt, if our two Governments went to war with Russia now we could, I will not say take Trans-Caucasia from her, but force her to keep all her 70,000 soldiers there, and even reinforce them. When, however, she has completed her railway from Vladikavkas viâ Petrovsk to Baku, she will have an alternative route to the Georgian road, and will be able to pour as many troops as she likes into the country, whether that road is blocked or not. The dangers to her attendant on a native insurrection diminish, in fact, every day."

All I heard in other quarters confirms Hassi Bey's opinion as to the futility of counting on a native insurrection. Discontented landed proprietors, oppressed by the Tchinovniks, may murmur against the Government and Georgian Nobles, whether in the Imperial service or in exile in Turkey, talk of the readiness of her people to rise, but, from all I could learn, the old clannish feeling, which made whole districts follow their Chief, without thinking either of the consequences or of the causes of their action, is almost dead, and the "aspirations" of "young Georgian" and "young Armenian" patriots are not much of a substitute for it. As these clan feelings are dying out, and the old fighting state of society fading into the distance, the mass of the population are beginning to appreciate the blessings of order and regular government. New interests are developing every day, which disturbances would jeopardize. "After all," said one of the Armenian "patriots" to me, "the Government, whatever be its name, which gives security for life and property and trade, may rule here without fear of being shaken from within." I do not presume to give an opinion, but I am inclined to suspect that he was right.

I have mentioned the "young Georgian party." I saw a good deal less of them than I did of the Armenians, but their movement is very like that of the "literary"

and "progressist" Armenian school I have described, and is, in fact, a somewhat recent copy of it. The Georgians are, however, at a disadvantage as compared with the Armenians, in that they have no separate Church to serve as a rallying point to their nationality. Being Orthodox, their old National Church has been absorbed into the Russian, and the Bishops are the mere nominees of the St. Petersburgh Holy Synod. They had, until lately, a Georgian Seminary at Tiflis for the Georgian clergy, but the murder of the Rector by a student who had been expelled for reading a Georgian newspaper (an offence very severely prohibited) served as a pretext for closing it, and thus crushing what might have developed into a seat of Georgian culture. Throughout Georgia the Church services are celebrated in Church Slavonic, but where the people do not understand the Russian language they are allowed to say and sing the congregational parts in their own. I saw a service of this kind at Mleti, where the priest read his part in Church Russian, and the clerk and people responded in Georgian. The Georgian "literary patriots," however, are endeavouring to counteract this Russifying process by keeping alive as much as possible the study of Georgian literature and history, and, although there is no love between them and the Armenians, who have enriched themselves by the ruin of the Georgian nobility, they are beginning to draw near them for common objects. I had meant to go and see the great Georgian Monastery at Kutais, but it would have taken me too long, and I must reserve it for another occasion. I will write again from Kars, and remain, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

P.S.—I should add that Hassi Bey told me that though the 1st Regiment of the famous 19th Division (quartered in Cis-Caucasia) had received its marching orders some time ago, its departure had been indefinitely suspended.

A. H. H.

Inclosure 2 in No. 76.

Mr. A. Hardinge to Sir R. Morier.

Dear Sir Robert, *Kars, April* 26, 1888.

I RESUME my "notes de voyage" from Etchmiadzin, where I stopped for a day and a-half at the great monastery. It is a curious old place, a monastery with a great school attached to it, which educates young Armenians chiefly, but not exclusively, for the Church, a library full, I believe, of valuable manuscripts (Aristotle, &c., in Armenian), and a printing press. More than all this, it is the great centre of all the literary, religious, and to a certain extent political, life of the Armenians; and therefore, though its purposes are nominally religious, and its government strictly ecclesiastical, its whole character and spirit are secular. It is, in fact, like Oxford in the last century—a lay soul in an ecclesiastical body. The conventual rules seemed extremely lax. It was Lent when I got there, and in hall, on the evening of my arrival, I partook of a frugal dinner of herbs; but on the following day I went to lunch with one of the monks in his cell—a very fairly comfortable little room—and a *déjeuner gras* was duly served us, in which the other monks of the party joined with evident gusto, the Chancellor of the monastery, a venerable Church dignitary, who dropped in during the course of the meal, looking on with apparent approval.

My entertainer was a very enlightened young man, who had studied at Heidelberg, and spoke French and German perfectly. He had taken Orders, he said, "pour faire la femme," but his occupation in the monastery was not a religious one. "I am the editor," he said, "of the newspaper 'Ararat,' which is printed free of censorship at the monastic press, and is at once a monkish chronicle—(so, at least, I understood him)—and an organ of Armenian aspirations."

He was a strong "Progressist" in his views, and enlarged, as he puffed his chibouk, on the usefulness of the monastery as a rallying-point for Armenian nationalism.

"Even those of us," he said, "who are avowed free-thinkers—as is, of course, the case with many who have studied in Europe—defend and support Etchmiadzin on this account; it is not merely a Church sanctuary, or even a quasi-secular school, it is the head-quarters of our whole organization."

The most complete harmony certainly seemed to reign between the monks and

the Europeanized—or rather Germanized—lay professors whose acquaintance I made at the school.

There was a kind of speech day going on there (it being founders' day), to which I was taken by Bishop Ormanian, the Theological Professor, a very cultivated man, who had been a Roman Catholic in the days before the Vatican Council, and had acted as private secretary to Antonelli. The proceedings consisted of essays on the life of St. Gregory of Armenia (the hero of the day) and other Armenian worthies, which were read by the students (in gowns something like those of Winchester scholars), with interludes of what I gathered to be Armenian national hyms. The school arrangements seemed very good and clean. The boys dine in the monastery hall and attend chapel—in gowns or surplices, according to their status—in the monastery church. A party of them were being taken over the library when I visited it, and being shown the manuscripts, in which they seemed to take great interest, by one of their masters. Altogether, a far more Western spirit seemed to pervade the place than anything I had ever seen in the Orthodox monasteries of Russia.

Only a minority of the monks seemed to understand Russian; the lay teachers generally spoke it, and a Western language or two, French or German—but more often German—as well. The boys are taught gratis, and those who do not enter the Church become, in most cases, schoolmasters, and ultimately, if industrious and able, professors in higher schools, but there is nothing to prevent them from going into other careers. They appeared to be of all ages from 10 to 18 or 19.

From Etchmiadzin I rode across country to Alexandropol. I had meant to reach Kars by a more southerly route by Kagisman, where I heard that the Russians were building a new military road, but I was deterred by the bad state of the communications, owing to the floods of the Araxes. As it was, the road, or rather track, to Alexandropol was in a shocking condition, and the horse which I hired at Etchmiadzin proved so wretched a screw that I had to walk by his side most of the way. The country we traversed was bare and thinly populated; during the whole 60 miles we only passed a few wretched Armenian and Tartar mud villages. At one of these, a Tartar hamlet, we passed the night, and early next morning crossed a high range of mountains—a western continuation of those I had crossed between Delijan and Erivan, on which the snow still lay deep and the rain turned into an icy hail. At an Armenian village in these mountains where we stopped for breakfast the people took me for a Russian Tchinovnik, and were loud in their complaints and appeals, in broken Russian, about the hardships of the new Military Law. "Is it true, Barine," said one, who appeared to be the principal speaker, "that the 'Gosudar,' after taking our sons away to be soldiers, is going to take our houses and farms from us and transplant us into Russia?" I assured them that all such tales were inventions, that the Czar loved his Armenians, and that, as he protected their lives and properties, it was only reasonable that when he called on them they should help him in the defence of the country, which was, after all, their own. All sorts of stories had evidently been circulated of the intention of the Government to take the land and give it to the Molokans, and of the horrors of military service. In the villages, if one patted the children, and said how well and strong they looked, the people answered, half defiantly, "Ah, yes; they are all to be soldiers now." They seemed miserably poor. It was a great triumph if one could get a cup of milk anywhere. Their only food appeared to be what they called "lovatch," a kind of flabby, indigestible, bread-pancake, which one tore into long strips, and which was tough and without much taste. Their houses were merely sheds for their cattle and horses, with a kind of raised pen in the middle, separated from the beasts by a low paling, and having within a low platform against the paling on each side, on which they slept at night and reposed in the daytime on mats and rugs. There were no chairs or tables; one lay or sat on this kind of dais or platform and ate one's food from a dish by one's side. I found tea nearly everywhere, and in Mahommedan houses almost always Turkish coffee. The Tartars were far more hospitable than the Armenians, and gave one all they had without taking payment.

I only stayed one night at Alexandropol, a dirty, dingy-looking town, made more gloomy by a pouring leaden sky above, and a slough of black mud in all the streets. At the little inn, whose bar seemed a sort of club for the Tchinovniks and officers of the place, I very nearly had a row with a drunken student, who, seeing I was a foreigner, assumed that I must be a Prussian or English spy, and tried to put me through an insolent interrogatory, assuring me at the same time, amidst the applause of some officers, who had also had too much, that he, as a Russian,

defied England and Austria and Germany, and the world. However, I kept my temper, and declined to take him seriously; so, like a true Russian, his drunkenness soon took the maudlin form, and he ended by violently shaking hands and swearing that I was "a knight without fear or reproach," and that he himself was another. I was very glad he came to this conclusion, as at one moment I quite thought I was in for a nasty row.

Before the late war Alexandropol was the frontier fortress of Russian Asia against the Turks. A little stream, a few versts out of the town, marked the old frontier, a more visible landmark being afforded, however, by an old Turkish fort, now crumbling into ruins, on the summit of a solitary hill. The Russians since the conquest have made an excellent road, along which we posted, from Alexandropol to Kars. It keeps for most of the way near the banks of the "Kars River," but occasionally leaves it to make short cuts across bleak-looking uplands. The whole of this country, since the Turks have left, has been settled by Russian heretics, Molokans and Duchobortzi. I came upon the last sect for the first time at Argina, the first village at which we changed horses after leaving Alexandropol. Their religion, as they expounded it to me, is extremely simple. They reject all Sacraments, priests, and sacred books, even the Bible; their worship consists in extempore prayers to Christ and to the Virgin Mary offered up by each member of the congregation in turn. Though they do not allow images, they revere all the Saints of the Orthodox Calendar, and have a feast, partly picnic, partly sacrifice, every month of June, in honour of the Prophet Elijah. Yet, even among them the love of external marks and symbols still survives. I asked whether they differed from the Molokans in any other point beyond the rejection of the Bible. "Oh, yes," they said, "there is another great difference; the Molokans grow their hair long, and wear their shirts over their trousers; we cut our hair, and tuck in our shirts." I asked whether this had any symbolical significance, but they could only answer that it had always been so, and they appeared to know nothing of the origin of their sect, or of any positive doctrine held by it. I suspect that, with no written standards, their beliefs fluctuate, and would be found to be different in every district, and that the invertebrate character of their creed, and their consequent freedom from fanaticism, makes them less objectionable in the eyes of the administration than the Molokans. They are certainly less distrustful of the authorities. "The Molokans," they said, "are cunning people, but we are frank and simple; we tell every one about our religion, because we have nothing we need hide." On the other hand, from all I could hear, the Molokan faith is often adopted as a disguise by the immoral and revolutionary sects, which are thus enabled to practise their rites unmolested in these remote and little-known districts. The Duchabors I saw all came from the Tambov Government, which would seem to be the chief nest of heresy in the Empire.

After passing three more large Molokan villages, distant each about 10 miles from the other, we came in sight of Kars, and a splendid place it certainly looked from a distance, on the top of a tremendous rock, washed on three sides by the Kars River. Inside, however, it is simply a filthy Turkish town, which the Russians have done little to improve. The Governor, General Fornitch, was away, and I accordingly called to-day on his second in command, General Pitander, a Finn, and, I am told, a very douce man, to ask permission to visit the fortress. "I am afraid," said the General, "that we can't let you do that. We are building a lot of new forts and other works there, which it is impossible to show to a foreigner." "Well," I said, "I am not a military man, and you might show me all your forts and I should be none the wiser; but, of course, it is quite natural that you should not wish to betray your secrets. Would you, however, allow me, without going to the new forts, just to drive round the old fortress to see it as a matter of historical interest? Being an Englishman, and having read about Williams' defence, you will understand my wish to see the place without reference to its modern military importance." The General thought for a moment. "Oh, he said, I think I can do that, I will write you an order; at least, stop a minute," and he rang and sent for his Secretary, a somewhat truculent-looking Colonel. "Colonel," he said, "this English gentleman, who is recommended to us by Prince Dondoukoff, wishes to have a general view of the old fortress, the historic part, you know, not, of course, the new works. Don't you think we might send some one round with him?" The Colonel's answer came sharp and short. "Without a special permit from St. Petersburgh—out of the question." The poor old General looked snubbed, and tried politely to console me by saying that I might drive round the walls of the

fortress in an "isvostchik," and that I should get a very good view of it, which I accordingly did this afternoon. To-morrow I am off to Erzeroum. Luckily, I have found an Armenian horse-dealer who is taking horses into Turkey, and as their export is forbidden by the Russians, is very glad if any one will offer to ride one and take it across the frontier as his own. The Turkish Consul, Danil Bey, of whom I have been seeing a good deal, tells me his Chancelier is also going home on leave, so I shall have his company as far as Erzeroun, and not be left entirely to the tender mercies of my Armenian.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 76.

Mr. A. Hardinge to Sir R. Morier.

Trebizond, May 6, 1888.

Dear Sir Robert,

I HAVE just arrived here too late to catch the steamer to Constantinople, and shall have to wait till Wednesday or Thursday for another. My journey from Kars to Erzeroum has given me, for the first time, an idea of what Orientals can be, and I am no longer surprised that the Turks should be thought hopeless. As I told you in my last letter (which you will probably receive at the same time as this), I had made arrangements to travel with the Chancelier of the Turkish Consulate and a party of Turkish merchants from Kars; we were to meet at 8 o'clock in the morning, and start at once, so as to cover as much ground as possible. At 8 accordingly I was at the rendezvous; the Chancelier, a very nice man, an Armenian, who spoke very fair French, was already booted and spurred for the journey; he had put on his Consular uniform, including a very smart sword, presumably to be ready for any brigands on the road (unfortunately, on his tumbling over his horse's head the second morning of the journey, the sword snapped in two). The rest of the caravan, however, were nowhere to be seen; hours passed, messengers were sent in different directions, but in vain; so at last I insisted that we should start without waiting for them, and at about 12 we got off, having lost the early morning, and with it the possibility of reaching Sari Kamish, the end of the first day's journey, before night. We rode along a good broad road, running parallel with the Kars River, through a bare open country, bounded pretty well on all sides by snow-covered hills, and in about two hours arrived at a large Molokan village called Vladikars, built on the site of a ruined Turkish one, which the Turks abandoned after the war. Like the other villages inhabited by Russian heretics in this country, it consisted simply of a single broad and muddy street, with wooden "izbas" on each side, and about half way up it the little Molokan meeting-house, which had only just been restored. Outside the building there was a knot of peasants talking together—the regular Russian type, long straw-coloured hair and sheep-skins—and, thinking it might be a good opportunity of hearing something about their sects and customs, I got off and made them show me their church. Inside it was perfectly plain, and might easily have been the Little Bethel or Salem of an English village, just a few wooden benches, and at the end a table with a number of Bibles and Psalters in Russian and Church Slavonic. The Molokans were very communicative, and replied, without any of the hesitation which one notices among the Old Believers, to my questions about their system and practices. The non-Judaizing ones—and this village belonged to that category—are evidently very like some of our own extreme sects, rejecting all ecclesiastical ordinances not explicitly mentioned in Scripture (which they take, inclusive of the Apocrypha, as their one rule of life and faith), and explaining those prescribed in it, in a spiritual and figurative sense. They were much interested in my account of the English Church and sects, and requested me to make a statement of my own views on these subjects. I said that, while agreeing with them in regarding the worship of images as unscriptural, I could not understand their position respecting the Sacraments, and especially baptism, and on this we had a long discussion, which enabled me to form an opinion as to their creed. They laid their chief stress on the difference between the baptism of John and that of the Gospel, as indicated by the text. "John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost," by which they understood a kind of spiritual new birth, something like the "conversion" of Evangelicalism. This convinces me that the Molokan heresy

(of whose origin its own votaries know nothing) must have originally spread from the German Pietists and Herrnhüter settled by Catherine II along the Lower Volga, probably finding receptive ground among the extreme priestless sects of the old Ritual, though I must say I found no trace among the Molokans of millennial or apocalyptic notions.

We made great friends; they were evidently much interested at finding a "Barine" who could confute them out of the Scripture (as I, of course, had no difficulty in doing), knowledge of the sacred text being with them one of the greatest titles to respect, and they begged me to stay the night at their village, and meet their principal men for discussion. I was very much struck with their knowledge of the Bible, and evident interest in it. It seemed strange to hear pure-blooded moujiks debating quite like Scotch or English Nonconformists. They all came from Tambov originally, but they had been first settled at Elisavetpol, and only moved to their present homes after the war. They have not, however, been a great success as colonists, and the country has, from an agricultural point of view, gone back since the departure of the Turkish peasants. The latter were extremely industrious, whereas the Molokans, accustomed to live miserably at home, are quite content if they can get enough out of the land to scrape along with, and do not (so I am told) make the most they can of it. Under Turkish rule the revenue of the Province of Kars covered its expenditure; this is no longer the case, though, of course, it must be said on the other side that the Russians are spending money on public works which the Turks never thought of, and that their elaborate bureaucracy is naturally dearer than the more primitive organization of a Turkish province.

Ten versts beyond Vladikars we stopped for dinner at an Armenian village called Bela Achmet. All the peasants could produce was a kind of mess of fried eggs and butter, which we had to eat with our fingers out of a dish on the ground. Just as we were sitting down to it we heard that the rest of our caravan had arrived, having started at about 10, with a complete disregard for their appointment.

The party consisted of a Kars Turkish merchant, Halil Bey by name, a man of about 50; a friend of his, Hadji Mehemed Effendi, a good deal younger; and a Kurd named Ala Bek. In addition to these there was my Armenian horse-dealer, and two or three low-class Turks, who took advantage of our caravan, but whom the gentlemen of the party, *i.e.*, Halil Bey, the Chancelier, myself, &c., kept at a distance. And now began a long palaver, the first of many of the same kind. It appeared that Halil Bey, whom I soon found out to be the butt of his friends, had tumbled into a river on the road, and was in a state of such moisture and agitation that he wished a halt made for the night at Bela Achmet, our present stopping-place. As it was 4 in the afternoon, I vehemently protested, and declared I would go on alone; the Chancelier supported me, and the other Turks retired rather sulkily. As soon, therefore, as we had finished dinner we started for Kara Hamza, the next village, about 15 versts off, still traversing the same kind of country, and passing about half-way a large Molokan village named Woronzoff. Judge of our surprise and disgust when, on arriving, we learnt that Halil Bey and company had started while we were still dining, had got to Kara Hamza just before us, and secured the best quarters for themselves. I afterwards found out that we had the whip hand over them, as they trusted to our official characters to pass the frontier without trouble, and would have endured anything rather than lose us. We stopped at the house of a Turkish peasant, Kara Hamza being a mixed settlement of Molokans and of Turks who from poverty and apathy had elected to stay in Russia. Our host, a very decent sort of fellow, with a large family of sons (the female part of the establishment was, of course, invisible), complained bitterly of the Russian authorities.

He said that his co-religionists were constantly being bullied and robbed by the Molokans, who encroached upon their farms, shifted all the local burdens on to their shoulders, and got all the best bits of land for themselves; and that, as the poor Turks were regarded as "aliens," and, moreover, knew scarcely any Russian, the "Natchalnik," a Georgian, would give them no redress, and always decided in favour of the Molokans. Their lot was so hard that they wished to cross the frontier into Turkey, and had almost got permission to do so, but at the last moment Prince Dondoukoff had stopped it. He was very civil to me on being told I was an Englishman, but said sadly that, during the last war, they had always been expecting English help, which never came. Next morning at about 6 we were

on horseback again, and I was formally introduced for the first time to Halil Bey, a grave, grey-bearded Turk, who, though he had lived eleven years in Russia, knew scarcely any Russian, so that a sustained conversation with him was difficult. He was mounted on an old grey horse, of which he was inordinately proud, and I found that the one means of hurrying him on was to work on his vanity in this animal by telling him that we should arrive in Erzeroum before him, and explain that Halil Bey had been left behind because his horse was too old and infirm to keep pace with us. Whenever this possibility was suggested he gave the beast an angry cut with his whip and galloped on a little distance ahead. Hadji Mehemed was a fairly pleasant sort of man, and took great delight in chaffing Halil Bey, who he said was one of the biggest liars and fools in creation. He described, with much gusto, his tumbling into the river, and how he lay in the water with one foot in the stirrup, calling his friends sons of bitches and all sorts of opprobrious names because they did not wade in and pull him out. The Kurd, Ala Bek, was a rough, good-natured fellow, and as he had a fair stock of Russian, I talked a good deal with him, but he was too ignorant to be really interesting. It took us four hours to get from Kara Hamza to Sari Kamish, travelling slowly so as not to tire our horses as we had a very rough road before us in the afternoon. The country after leaving Kara Hamza became hilly, and as we approached the mountains, very cold and more Russian than Turkish in appearance, quantities of black-looking pine-woods on all sides, and ice and snow in all the crevices of the rocks. Sari Kamish itself lies on the slope of the mountain range, a big, dirty-looking Russian village, with a third-rate "Traktir," and lots of Russian soldiers about. A regiment of the 39th Division is quartered there, their barracks being the only decent building in the place. After breakfast and a good deal of unnecessary discussion caused by an attempt of Halil Bey's to make us stay till next morning at Sari Kamish, "so as to be quite fresh before crossing the mountains, and arrive at the frontier before sunset," we started once more, this time along a shocking bad track.

At Sari Kamish the Russian post-road from Tiflis ends. Before the annexation it stopped at Alexandropol, but during the ten years which have elapsed since then it has been extended to Sari Kamish, and the Russians are now completing it up to their new frontier. They have been making at the same time two military roads parallel to it, one to the north from Alexandropol to Olti, and another to the south from Etchmiadzin viâ Igdir and the Araxes Valley to Kagisman. This latter one is being pushed on with great energy, and I was told that the annual manœuvres of the 39th Division near Igdir were to be given up this summer so as to enable the troops to work at it uninterrupted.

The bit between Sari Kamish and the frontier is at present very bad, and was made worse by the masses of melting snow. The distance is only 38 versts (or 22 miles), but we took nearly seven hours to do it. The road (or path) winds up a succession of pretty steep hills, and there is a most break-neck descent from the highest point to a little Armenian hamlet called Handara, at which a few Cossack frontier guards are stationed. Here the track divides, or seems to do so, one branch going to the right in a north-west, and the other to the left in a south-west direction. The former has the appearance of being the main road, and the Chancelier, who had been this way before, thought it was, but Halil Bey insisted that this was not so, and his assumed superior knowledge, supported by the statement of a villager, prevailed. Before we had gone far, however, it was clear that he was wrong. The path (if one can call it so) ran alongside a little mountain stream, through a gradually narrowing valley, and after a time became a mere track for goats, up and down steep, rocky banks, which obliged us to get off and lead our horses. The unfortunate Chancelier, who was not used to this sort of thing, and whose smart uniform was being torn by brambles and splashed as he floundered through muddy pools, called down curses on the head of Halil Bey; the other Turks sweated, groaned, and swore. Altogether our poor little caravan presented the most woful appearance. At last the valley ended, and we came out dead beat and covered with mud on to the road which we ought to have taken from the first. We were nearly two hours' ride from the frontier, the sun was sinking, and the grave question was, would the Russian outposts let us cross that night? The Chancelier's blood was up. "We've got our official papers," he said, "we'll gallop on and bully the Cossacks into letting us across. As for Halil and the others, we'll let them stick here; they'll be flayed alive by the Cossacks, and serve them right." Off we galloped accordingly, followed at a respectable distance by the Turks, Halil spurring on his exhausted grey, and arrived just as the sun was

setting at Kara Urgan, the last village on Russian territory. At the Custom-house, the chief building in the place, we were stopped and told we could not go further as it was past sunset. We produced our passports, talked big about our official character, I brandishing Dondoukoff's letter, and at last succeeded in getting permission to go on. Just at this moment our Turkish fellow-travellers came up. But in their case, the officials flatly refused. It was touching to see the despair of Halil Bey when we explained that we should have to abandon him. The idea of being left helpless among devouring "Tchinovniks," of having to pass the ordeal of the frontier without our official support, seemed dreadful to him. Unable to argue in Russian, he anticipated that the validity of his passport would be questioned in order to wring money from him, and his bales of merchandize confiscated, and he begged that we would not desert him. Angry as we were with him, we could not help feeling sorry for him, and even the Russian Tchinovnik, a very nice, civil fellow, was melted, and said, "Well, well, he and his friends may go over as your suite." Our passports were all duly countersigned, and I thought all our sorrows were at an end. Alas! I had forgotten "Dual Russia." Having squared the civil, we had to deal with the military power. About a quarter of a mile beyond Kara Urgan a little brook divides the Czar's Empire from the Sultan's. On one bank stands a stone fort manned by Cossacks; on the other a sublime sentry box in a state of advanced dilapidation, and characteristically enough, without a sentry to guard it. In front of the fort a wooden bar, painted black, white, and red, crosses the road, and on its roof paces a Cossack, with a loaded rifle, and orders to shoot any one attempting to pass the brook without leave.

This warrior immediately challenged us, and we pulled up. Then there was the same old story over again; no one could cross after sunset, the Cossack officer cared nothing about our pass from the Customs, he took his orders from his military superiors and no one else. On our side we urged our official character and urgent business, Dondoukoff's letter, people of our sort not to be trifled with, and the rest. Our Armenian Chancelier was most eloquent, he would telegraph to his Government, and remain, if need be, for a week for their reply and further orders. He solemnly cast upon the officer the entire responsibility of the grave results which might follow our detention. As for Halil Bey and the rest, who kept respectfully behind us, they were, he said, our escort, he declined to move without them, people of our rank could not be asked to travel without attendants. The officer began to be visibly impressed, and, after about half-an-hour's uncertainty, while a sergeant was being sent to Kara Urgan to confer with the authorities there, he gave in. Up went the bar, we dashed into the brook, and, amidst many pious ejaculations from Halil Bey and his friends, landed safe on the Turkish side.

I very soon realized that we had reached the Sultan's territory. It was by now nearly night, and we had a mile to ride to Zivin, the frontier Turkish village. To my surprise all our Turks, who had dawdled the whole day, began to flog and spur their horses, and to shout to me to be quick, to gallop, not to mind the beasts being lagged. I said my horse was tired and the track full of stones and pitfalls. "Don't talk nonsense," they said, "ride fast, we are not now in Russia. Brigands! brigands! the country is full of them; it is dangerous to be out after dark. Before we get to Zivin we may be stopped, we may be plundered, we may be killed." I pointed that in this case it would have been well to have hurried up rather earlier in the day. The only answer was, "Quick! Quick! Brigands!" At last we got to Zivin, a little Turkish village under high crags, with a Custom-house at its entrance, at which the Chief of the Customs, a staid old Turk, and his assistant, a very civil, amiable man—Nasim Effendi was his name—received us with great politeness. The Customs office was turned into a bed-room for us, and nothing could be more friendly or hospitable than our hosts; but I was very glad, especially as I could not enjoy their conversation, when, after apparently interminable rounds of coffee and pipes, they at length allowed us to go to sleep. Next morning, however, they fairly tried my temper. I wanted to start early, so as to reach Erzeroum that night, or at least get as near it as possible. To my horror I found that a long Customs examination, which was to have taken place the night before, and had simply been postponed from Turkish laziness, had to be gone through, and never did I see anything done so exhaustively or with such exasperating deliberateness. First of all the horses had to be valued, as an import duty is imposed on them calculated on the price they are likely to fetch, and a long discussion took place with each owner on the subject. For the first time Halil Bey was heard to depreciate his old grey, and on this point the Customs officers seemed to find

no difficulty in agreeing with him. Then all the luggage had to be opened, and each article taken out, unpacked, and most carefully inspected. At last, when all had been repacked, I proposed that we should start. "Impossible," said the Chancelier, "the Customs officers are preparing a luncheon in our honour." In vain I urged that we ought to lunch half-way to Erzeroum. Nasim Effendi protested that the preparations had already begun, and we had to stay for it with the best grace we could. The lunch was of very great length; first soup, then pilaff, then a kind of macaroni pudding, then sausages, then some sort of sweet dish in rice, and lastly a kind of hash or ragout as the "point culminant." For me a separate plate, with a knife and spoon, were produced, with visible pride; the Orientals eat with their fingers out of the dish. There was nothing to drink during the meal, on the strictest Schweninger principle, but at its close water, coffee, and a kind of spirit called mastic were handed round.

It was past midday when we at last got off. All idea of reaching Erzeroum, or even Hassan Kaleh, the nearest town to it, had to be given up, and we decided to stop for the night at an Armenian village named Kuprikeoi, about 30 miles off. Our road lay across bare treeless uplands, apparently uncultivated, but with stretches of arable here and there which Turkish peasants were ploughing with buffaloes or oxen. It was a mere track marked out by hoof-prints. We passed a single village, a wretched ruinous heap of mud huts, called Ardost. Kuprikeoi, where we stayed for the night, was little better; in fact, the only decent place on the whole road was the little town of Hassan Kaleh, three hours' ride from Kuprikeoi, which we reached early on the next morning. Here our track joined the great road from Trebizond to the Persian frontier, and for the rest of the way to Erzeroum (over the "Camels-back Hills" of the late war) it was pretty fair travelling. We reached Erzeroum on the fourth day at 1 P.M., having done the 120 miles in three days and a-half, which I suppose for these countries is goodish going.

I put up at Erzeroum at our Acting Consul's, a former Student Interpreter named Wratislaw, who is in charge until Chermside arrives. The only other political Consul in the place (the Frenchman having recently died and the Italian being a native chemist) is the Russian, a Consul-General and a military General too, and one of the most important personages in Erzeroum. I met him on the night of my arrival, when he came to our Consulate to play "preference," the one civilized relaxation there. He is a sly old Russian, with a good deal of humour, and, from all I hear, a thorough-paced intriguer. "He is sure to suspect you of a 'mission,'" said Wratislaw, "and will rack his brains to guess it, so if you want to tease him be very mysterious." "Mysterious" accordingly I was, but not too much so, and we soon became excellent friends. He gave me a capital dinner, and then took me for a drive in his landau, with a Cossack on the box and mounted Cossacks before and behind, a spectacle which is believed to have a salutary moral effect upon the Turks, and to fill them with proper awe for the "Moskov's" power.

Wratislaw insisted on my seeing the Governor-General, Musa Pasha, so this morning I was duly led by him to the konak. We wandered about some time, saw a Turkish service going on in a Consular office, and spent much of our time in a hot little office belonging to the Vali's Secretary, a timid little French-speaking Armenian, with a deep hatred, mixed with terror and contempt, for his master. After waiting ten minutes we were shown into the Vali's reception-room. His Excellency is a very old man and almost "ramolli." He was Shakir's tutor at the Military College, and has a high opinion of his pupil's diplomatic abilities. He is a very strict Mahommedan, a hater of "foreign dogs," and an austere moralist, but not, it appears, a prophet in his own family, the ladies of which are said to be very free and easy, and ready to shower their favours on the first good-looking Moslem who applies. Politically, he is, I should think, utterly useless. We had a long talk on the situation, and the remarks Wratislaw translated to me were certainly most senile. As Bulgaria and Servia had fallen away from Turkey, so would Saxony and Wurtemberg from Germany. All great Empires tended to this sort of decomposition, the examples of Rome and Turkey proved it. Then came a metaphor about the shield of Achilles, which had something to do with Bismarck, but whether Bismarck was Achilles or his shield I could not quite make out; I rather think he was both. What struck me in talking to him was the complete difference between our European minds and these Eastern ones, such different things seem to strike them; they reason so entirely differently from us that it is difficult to reach any really common ground.

The Vali, from what I hear, is very greatly under General Dennit's influence, and there seems reason for suspecting that his oppression of the Armenians is the result of the General's advice. The Turks have the wildest, most foolish ideas about the supposed Armenian revolutionary movement, which they ascribe to English designs for converting Armenia into an autonomous "buffer" State—the "Asiatic Bulgaria," in fact, of my Tiflis friends. The sympathies proclaimed by Bryce, and the activity of Protestant Missions, whose converts learn our language, call themselves "Inglisi," and believe themselves entitled to English Consular protection, have done much to confirm these ideas, of which the Russians have taken advantage, it being naturally to their interest that the Turks should harry the Armenians, and that their own Armenian subjects should see that, in spite of the conscription, and the war against their language, they are better off than their brethren across the border. Yet the Turks are such fools that they won't see (1) that the wretched Armenians, without weapons, or fight of any sort in them, are not a revolutionary danger, and (2) that the Porte is simply playing into the hands of its enemies. The Vali, when he is asked why he keeps in prison, without trial, men guilty only of reading ancient histories of Armenia, or possessing maps of the old Armenian Kingdom, replies, in jargon learnt from General Dennit, that the prisoners are "Nihilists," and that a "strong Government" is needed "to stamp out the spirit of discontent." On his side General Dennit sings his Excellency's praises, and swears he is the best Vali that ever lived.

Early on Tuesday I left Erzeroum for Trebizond. Wratislaw had procured for me a horse and muleteer, and had urged me to take a "zaptieh" or Turkish gendarme. He was anxious that I should keep the same one the whole way, but this the authorities would not agree to, as the zaptiehs are not allowed to go beyond their own districts, and I was told that I must take a new one at each stage. On the morning of my departure, however, the zaptieh who was to go the first stage with me announced, in a cheerful tone, that if I liked he would go to Trebizond with me. I told him of the Governor-General's prohibition, and that of the Alai Beg. "I laugh at them both," he replied, with an agreeable smile; "I will go with you to Trebizond." "But," said I, "won't you get into trouble for going, against express orders, beyond your district?" "Oh, no," he said, "when you reach Trebizond, if you are pleased with me, you will give me a paper for the Alai Beg, stating that when we got to the end of the first stage I wished to leave you, but that you forced me, by the threat of blows, to disobey my orders and come on." I suggested that this device might not impose on the Alai Beg, and besides that, the excuse of being forced by threats of blows from an unarmed traveller into a breach of discipline was, for a police officer, a disgraceful one; but the zaptieh assured me that it was the usual course, and as Wratislaw seemed to approve, I consented to be a party to the fiction. I had no reason to regret it; my zaptieh, who was a superior sort of gendarme, being an "Ombashi," or Captain of ten—what Freeman would call a "tythingeman"—proved most useful as a servant. Besides which, he knew a few words of Russian, so that I did not feel absolutely helpless. We did the journey in four and a-half days, sleeping at solitary khans the two last nights, and at a Turkish village and little town, known respectively as Ashkaleh and Baiburt, the two first. The road is a pretty good one, but in a shocking state of repair; here and there it had been washed away by mountain streams, and on the Kop, a high snow-covered range, which we crossed the second day, its condition was simply disgraceful, owing chiefly to heavy avalanches in the winter, one of which had destroyed an entire caravan of camels, whose rotting remains still lay on our path, and made our horses shy. I believe the road was made at the suggestion of our Government, to divert the Persian transit trade, at a time before the Caucasus Railway existed, from the Russian dominions. It was to have gone as far as Bayazid, but beyond Erzeroum it is practically still non-existent. Still it is the great route between Constantinople and the eastern provinces of Asiatic Turkey. We met lots of caravans bringing goods to and from Tabriz, Bagdad, &c., but scarcely any solitary travellers. At Baiburt, however, we fell in with two Russian-speaking Armenians, who, though Ottoman subjects, kept an hotel at Rostoff on Don. They had been on a pilgrimage to some holy place near Moosh, "built by John the Baptist for the local Armenians," but had not been allowed by the monks there to push further on account of the insecurity of the country. To my surprise they spoke warmly of the Russian Government. "In Russia," one of them said, "the Judges do not consider in the least the race or creed of a plaintiff or defendant. I have had suits against Orthodox Russians, in

Russian Courts, and have won them. Could such a thing happen in your country? Well, if so, it is a grand thing." It was the old story—the relatively good rule of the Russians as compared with that of purely Eastern Governments, and the gratitude of these races for an administration which protected property and dealt out a fair measure of equal justice.

I shall not describe Trebizond, which is, I should think, a typical Levantine town. There is a Consular Body, whose members all quarrel about nothing at all, and a few mongrel European employés. Some of them—notably the Russian Consul and his wife—have been very kind to me; but I shall not be sorry to leave for Constantinople. I will write again from there, and remain, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 77.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received August* 27.)

(No. 317.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August* 17, 1888.

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the subject of the alleged persecution of Armenian Protestants, I have the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a copy of a Memorandum which Mr. Wratislaw, late Acting Consul at Erzeroum, has drawn up at my request, of the cases which came under his notice during his residence at Erzeroum.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 77.

Memorandum.

WITH regard to the alleged persecutions of Protestant Armenians in the districts of Van, Erzeroum, Diarbekir, and Kharpoot, I beg to state that, so far as the three last-named vilayets are concerned, nothing of the nature of "persecution" came to my knowledge during the time I was in charge of Her Majesty's Consulate for Kurdistan (October 1887—July 1888). Members of the Protestant community have up to the present been treated with especial favour by the Turkish authorities, and if, in future, they meet with less consideration than before, the fault will undoubtedly lie at their own door. A most regrettable incident occurred at the end of March in connection with the school of the American Protestant Mission at Erzeroum, which resulted in the only case of rigorous treatment shown to a Protestant which came to my knowledge. A pupil-teacher of the above school, Simpat by name, while passing through Erzinjian was found not to have his papers in order, and accordingly detained for inquiries to be made concerning him. A note-book was discovered amongst his baggage containing original school compositions in Armenian, of a nature not only offensive to Mussulman susceptibilities, but even distinctly seditious. These compositions were corrected in the handwriting of Siklimian, the head teacher of the Erzeroum Protestant school, who, after recognizing the corrections as his own, was arrested and thrown into prison. I was unable to obtain a sight of these documents myself, but it seems certain that they contained the words "pitiless," "religionless," and "dogs," applied to the Turks, besides an invocation to the Armenians in general to rise and throw off the Turkish yoke, for which purpose Siklimian considered only 100,000 patriots to be necessary. The Procureur-Général further informed me that Simpat had also committed to writing his views on the desirability of foreign—and more particularly British—intervention, but for the truth of this I am unable to vouch.

Simpat died in prison of typhoid fever on the 25th July, a day or two before my departure, but it was not suggested by his friends that his death was caused or accelerated by ill-treatment or neglect. He was not himself a Protestant, though brought up at a Protestant school. Siklimian is still in prison.

Two Protestant doctors of Kharpoot, fellow-travellers with Simpat, were arrested along with him at Erzinjian, but were soon after allowed to continue their journey. As the result of the suspicion which had thus fallen on the Protestant school, several of the pupils were one day stopped at one of the gates of Erzeroum and searched, but

nothing of a suspicious nature being found on them, were not detained more than a few minutes.

At the beginning of May three other Protestants were arrested at Erzinjian. Their release within twenty-four hours was much commented on by the Gregorian inhabitants, and attributed by them to special favouritism and foreign, *i.e.*, British, protection. It certainly contrasted strongly with the invariably longer detention of equally innocent Gregorians.

Lastly, three Protestants were arrested at Kharpoot, and released on bail after forty days' imprisonment. Our Agent being at Diarbekir at the time, I could procure no details on the subject of their arrest.

The above are the only instances which came to my knowledge of interference with Protestants by the Turkish authorities. Of "persecutions" I have heard nothing. Of what occurred in the Vilayet of Van I have no information.

(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

August 10, 1888.

No. 78.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received August* 27.)

(No. 324.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August* 18, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 307 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have received telegraphic replies to the inquiries which I addressed to Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum and Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van relative to the alleged intention of the Ottoman Government to settle Circassian immigrants amongst the Christian population in the neighbourhood of the latter town.

Colonel Chermside informs me that the local authorities at Erzeroum are ignorant of the intention of the Porte to grant lands to Mahommedans from Russia, and that both they and the Russian Consul-General are unaware of any considerable Circassian immigration.

Mr. Russell reports that there are rumours current at Van that Circassians are to be settled in the vilayet, but in what part of it he has not been able to ascertain. He adds that thirty-five Circassians have recently been enrolled in the gendarmerie.

I have instructed Colonel Chermside as well as Mr. Russell to report to me by despatch on this subject, and I shall not fail to bring to your Lordship's knowledge any further information I may obtain from either of them or from any other reliable source.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 79.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received September* 8.)

(No. 334.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August* 28, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 324 of the 18th instant, I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Colonel Chermside relative to the proposed settlement in Asia Minor of Moslem immigrants.

Although Colonel Chermside has no knowledge of the proposal which gave rise to this correspondence, his despatch contains some interesting information respecting the emigration of Mahommedans from Russian territory, a movement which has been in progress for some years past.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 79.

Colonel Chermside to Sir W. White.

Erzeroum, August 14, 1888.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour, in compliance with your Excellency's telegraphic instructions of the 12th August, to forward the following. I am unaware of the grounds of the rumour as to proposed settlements of Circassians among the Armenian population near Van.

At the time of the first great emigration from the Caucasus (some twenty-three years ago), Circassians, Lesghians, and others were settled near Kars, in Alishgird, at and near Moosh, in Bulanik Caza, at Akhlat (Lake Van), Tcharbuhur, Khinis (Erzeroum Vilayet), and other places in these parts, besides in other distant Settlements.

A Convention was subsequently entered into by Russia and Turkey that no Circassians should be established in Asia Minor east of Sivas, and, in accordance with this, the great Circassian Settlement of Azizieh, to the south of Sivas, was instituted.

The Russian Agent at Erzeroum has presumably watched over the observance of these conditions, so that, although here and there a few families may possibly have joined the old Settlements, there has been nothing on a large scale, and no new ones have been made.

Some time after the last war the Russian Government notified a three years' term during which inhabitants of the ceded districts must decide whether to accept Russian nationality or emigrate. This term subsequently received an extension of six months; it expired four or five years ago.

Since the last Russo-Turkish war, both during and prior to this term, a large number of other Moslems (non-Circassian) from the ceded districts have emigrated and been settled in various parts of Asia Minor. A considerable portion of these were settled in this portion of the country.

Since the expiration of the term for opting as to nationality considerable numbers of Moslems, Russian subjects, Caucasians and others, apply for and receive leave to emigrate; they usually embark at Batoum, and very few come across the land frontier.

The causes for this emigration are various: ordinary Moslems are usually glad enough, if a favourable occasion arises for disposing of their lands, to emigrate to Turkey.

The Circassians, though more clannish, are by no means content with Russian rule, and they also emigate, usually in larger bodies; the Russians, I am assured on good authority, place no obstacle in their way, and are glad to get rid of them.

By recent enactments (up to November 1887) all the population of the Caucasus and the frontier district are liable to military service or a tax in lieu.

All the Christians have to furnish conscripts; the Moslems, with the exception of certain Circassian tribes, do not serve, but pay a tax very similar in amount to that paid by the Christians in Turkey.

Certain tribes last year requested to serve instead of paying the tax; in some cases this was recommended by Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff and approved at St. Petersburgh, in the other cases permission was not accorded.

I am told that 60 per cent. of the Moslem population of the ceded districts has emigrated, and that a considerable proportion of the remainder would be glad to do so; the Turkish authorities, however, whether for political or other reasons, do not encourage this idea, nor, I believe, do the Russians do so, the latter by making much of the Headmen or exiling refractory ones, seem to keep the Moslem population well in hand.

For some months past, owing to the above causes, a considerable number of emigrants, including Circassians, has been constantly embarking at Batoum, none have been sent to Erzeroum or Van for settlement, and, I understand, none to Trebizond itself; but some have, I believe, been landed at Samsun, in the west of the Trebizond Vilayet.

The civil and military authorities here are unaware of the intention of the Porte mentioned in your Excellency's telegram.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

No. 80.

The Archbishop's Mission to the Assyrian Christians to Foreign Office.—(Received September 20.)

My dear Sir,

2, *Dean's Yard, Westminster, September* 20, 1888.

WILL you allow me to add the inclosed to the papers which you kindly received from me yesterday? They are copies only, and can therefore be retained, if you think fit to keep them.

I find that the letter of the 23rd August, of which I gave you a copy, is dated from Kochanes on the Turkish side of the frontier.

These papers, you will see, are quite private, and contain opinions expressed unreservedly. But they may be useful in showing the true state of the country, and helping to an appreciation of the feeling entertained by the Kurds towards the Christian population in their neighbourhood.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) F. J. GOLDSMID.

P.S.—The papers sent, including those left yesterday, are:—
Copies of—
1. Memorandum by the Rev. W. H. Browne, dated the 19th August, 1888.
2. Letter from the Rev. W. H. Browne to Messrs. Maclean and Lang, dated Kochanes, the 23rd *id.*
3. Letter from the Rev. Canon Maclean to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury.

F. J. G.

No. 81.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received September 22.)

(No. 346.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 7, 1888.

WITH reference to the telegrams addressed to your Lordship by Sir H. D. Wolff on the 28th and 30th ultimo, and repeated to me by him, I have the honour to state that neither the Grand Vizier nor the Minister for Foreign Affairs have so far admitted the possibility of any plot or intention on the part of the Kurds to cause a massacre of the Christians in the direction of Kochannes, Tchomun, &c.

On the receipt, however, of Sir H. D. Wolff's telegram of the 31st ultimo, stating that outrages on Christians had been committed, I instructed Sir A. Sandison to call the serious attention of the Grand Vizier to the fact.

His Highness, though still doubting the likelihood of such acts, undertook to telegraph on the subject to the Vali of Van on the 1st instant, enjoining on his Excellency to guard against the occurrence of anything of this nature, but concluded by observing that there is no such thing in existence as a "Kurdish army," which is mentioned in Sir H. D. Wolff's telegram of the 30th ultimo.

I am happy to see by Sir H. D. Wolff's telegram of the 1st instant that the statements of his Highness the Grand Vizier seem to be borne out by the information which has now reached Sir H. D. Wolff.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 82.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received September 22.)

(No. 359.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 18, 1888.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 233 of the 25th July, and to my despatches Nos. 307, 324, and 334 of the 7th, 18th, and 28th August, I have the

honour to transmit a copy of a despatch from Mr. Russell, in which he states that no Circassians have up to the present been settled in the Vilayet of Van, and that the rumours to which he referred in his telegram of the 14th August, the substance of which I forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 324 of the 18th August, were caused by an article which appeared in an Armenian paper published at Constantinople, and edited by the young Armenian party in this capital.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 82.

Vice-Consul Russell to Sir W. White.

Van, September 3, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to my telegram dated the 14th August, in reply to your Excellency's telegram dated the 12th August, asking for information regarding the Porte's alleged intention to settle Circassians among the Armenian Christians near Van, I have now the honour to inform your Excellency that, after making every inquiry, I find that the rumours current here which I reported were caused by an article published in the "Aravelk," an Armenian newspaper published at Constantinople. The article or paragraph alluded to appeared in the "Aravelk" of the 23rd July. No Circassians up to the present have been settled in this vilayet.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. F. RUSSELL.

No. 83.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 110.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 24, 1888, 1·15 P.M.

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY receives from missionary sources alarming accounts of attitude of Kurds towards Christian population.

Urge Porte to take effectual measures for their protection.

No. 84.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 286.)

Foreign Office, September 24, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 284 of the 19th instant, I transmit herewith a copy of a letter from Sir F. Goldsmid,* inclosing copies of further letters from missionaries in Kurdistan reporting on the attitude of the Kurds towards the Christians.

I have requested your Excellency, by telegraph, to urge the Porte to take effectual measures for the protection of the Christian population.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 85.

The Marquis of Salisbury to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Foreign Office, September 24, 1888.

My Lord Archbishop,

I HAVE received the communications from the missionaries in Kurdistan, which were left at this Office by Sir F. Goldsmid; and I have the honour to inform

* No. 80.

your Grace that I have telegraphed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople that you have received alarming accounts of the attitude of the Kurds towards the Christian population, and that I should wish his Excellency to urge the Porte to take effectual measures for their protection.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 86.

Consul-General Abbott to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received September 26.)

(No. 4. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tabreez, September 8, 1888.

RECENT events in Turkish Kurdistan, in the immediate vicinity of the Nestorian Patriarchate, causing the Missionaries and Christians in that region to fear a massacre on the part of the Kurds, have been fully reported by me to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have further the honour to inform your Lordship that, on the first receipt of this alarming intelligence, I immediately telegraphed to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran, and was subsequently in frequent telegraphic communication with his Excellency on the same subject.

I also imparted the information I had received to my Turkish colleague, Behdjet Effendi, who, at my request, telegraphed to the Pasha of Van to do everything in his power to pacify the Kurds and for the protection of the Christians; and he wired to the Porte and to the Turkish Ambassador at Tehran that he had taken that step.

I am happy to be able to report to your Lordship that prompt action has produced the desired result. Order has been restored in the disturbed districts; the fears of the Christians have been allayed; the Kurdish army which threatened their safety has dispersed.

Canon Maclean and his American colleagues have written to me, expressing their deep gratitude, and that of the Nestorian mountaineers, for the timely help thus afforded by Her Majesty's Government in consequence of the representations made to them by Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran on his learning from me the state of the case.

The scene of the trouble was Tehoma and Tiary, in Turkish territory, where, some thirty years ago, the terrible massacre of Nestorian Christians by the Kurds under Bedr Khan Beg took place. A graphic description of that occurrence was given at the time by the eloquent pen of Sir Henry Layard. Tehoma and Tiary, inhabited by these Christian mountaineers—a brave, hardy, and warlike race—are literally hemmed in by Kurdish tribes of a fierce and barbarous character. Kochannes, styled by the Turks Julamerk, is the residence of the Nestorian Patriarch within the Turkish border, and is two days' journey from Oroomiah or Urmi.

It will afford me great encouragement to know that the course I have pursued on the present occasion has met with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

P.S.—It is with great satisfaction that I am further enabled to inform your Lordship that the effervescence in Turkish territory did not spread to the Oroomiah frontiers on the Persian side. Peace prevails up to the present within the borders of Azerbaijan, and the value of the Shah's recent Proclamation is becoming every day more apparent in this province.

W. G. A.

No. 87.

Foreign Office to Consul-General Abbott.

(No. 1.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 29, 1888.

YOUR despatch No. 4 of the 8th September respecting the recent troubles in Turkish Kurdistan has been received, and I am directed by the Marquis of Salisbury

to inform you that your action, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch, is approved.

I am, &c.
(Signed) P. CURRIE.

No. 88.

Sir H. Drummond Wolff to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 1.)

(No. 170.)
My Lord, *Gulahek, September 4, 1888.*

ON the 27th ultimo I repeated to your Lordship a telegram I had received from Consul-General Abbott, informing me of a massacre said to have been projected by Kurds on Nestorian Christians. I at once informed the Persian Government of the report, and orders were immediately telegraphed to Tabriz to take the necessary precautions as far as regarded Persian territory. I also informed the Turkish Ambassador, who, while treating the report as unfounded, telegraphed to the Governor of Van and to the Porte on the subject. At the same time I communicated with the United States' Minister, who is much interested in these questions on account of the American missionaries at Oroomiah.

I now have the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch from Consul-General Abbott inclosing the documents on which his telegrams were based. They are certainly alarming, but the scene of the outrages already committed appear to have been on Turkish territory. All that can be done has been done, as I have telegraphed to Sir W. White, and the Turkish Ambassador, as I have before mentioned, has done so both to the local authorities and to the Porte.

M. de Balloy, my French colleague, informs me that he has heard from the French Consul at Tabriz of the murder or violation of twelve Chaldean women and the lifting of some thousands of sheep at Tiari, in Turkey, by Turkish Kurds, but he adds that the Persian Kurds are perfectly quiet.

I have thought it right to approve Mr. Abbott's letter to Canon Maclean, as the facts related may develop into more serious proportions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. DRUMMOND WOLFF.

P.S.—Since writing the above I learn from Consul-General Abbott, as well as from the Persian Government, that the Kurds have dispersed.

H. D. W.

Inclosure 1 in No. 88.

Consul-General Abbott to Sir H. Drummond Wolff.

Tabriz, August 22, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency extracts from letters from Canon Maclean and the Rev. H. Browne, English clergymen, and from Dr. Shedd, an American missionary, regarding the apprehended massacre of Nestorian Christians in Turkish Kurdistan.

I further inclose a letter from Mr. Coan, also an American missionary, who is at Kochanes, on the same subject.

Inclosure No. 3 is the copy of a letter which I have addressed to Canon Maclean. I trust that your Excellency will approve of what I have said about any expenses incurred by him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. G. ABBOTT.

P.S.—Mr. Coan's letter of great importance.

W. G. A.

Inclosure 2 in No. 88.

The Rev. Canon Maclean to Consul-General Abbott.

(Extract.) *Oroomiah, August 25, 1888.*

SINCE writing, we have had a more urgent letter from Browne, and Dr. Shedd has come here to consult with us what to do. We agreed that we should send a telegram to you, and that we should send you Browne's statement. When read, will you please put it in the inclosed envelope and register it. All telegraphs in Kurdistan are stopped.

Inclosure 3 in No. 88.

The Rev. Canon Maclean to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

(Extract.) *Oroomiah, August 25, 1888.*

I INCLOSE some very alarming news from Mr. Browne. There appears imminent danger of another great massacre like that of Bedr Khan Bey. I don't know if your Grace will think it desirable to let Lord Salisbury know about this. The Turks have stopped all telegraphs in Kurdistan, and information can reach Europe only through Persia.

Inclosure 4 in No. 88.

Memorandum by the Rev. W. H. Browne.

IN the summer and autumn of 1887, Artuch (or Artuchnais: this is illegible) of Hadji Aga and other Kurds, continually plundered sheep of Christian Ryats of the Berner (? illegible) near Kochanes, and of Leovin, &c., &c. There were also two affairs between Tairi and the Selai Kurds, in which the Kurds were the first offenders. In the late autumn, Hadji Agha's band was on its way towards Mosul, and Tiari stole a lot of their sheep in revenge for what they had stolen up here. It turned out that amongst these were sheep of a Sheikh, which, when the Tiari men knew, they sent (I think, 500 head of) sheep to the Sheikh, but he said they were not his, but every Kurd claimed this one or that. Therefore Tiari did not try any more to restore the rest of the Sheikh's sheep. About this Sheikh's sheep, the Kurds determined to wreck Tiari in the spring.

At the end of June, I forget on what provocation by the Kurds, some Tiari men went into the Berner (? illegible), which is near Amadia, and brought away more than 1,000 head of sheep. The Meera, or Chief of the Kurds, there is also Mudir, *i.e.*, a Governor under the Kaïmakam, *i.e.*, he is an officer of the Turkish Government. He entirely sacked a village of five or six houses, his own subjects under his Mudirship, who were of the Tiari race.

In June, the temporary Kaïmikam of Julamerk, Ahmed Beg, who is now superseded by the restoration of the former Kaïmakam, sent zaptiehs and plundered two villages, Coon and (? illegible), by way of collecting the taxes, whereas the taxes had always been demanded through a man of Mar Shimon, or with the men of Baz (or Diz), in October, when they had money from their rice.

Tiari sent word to Julamerk that if they carried on this game they would sack Julamerk. Shortly after this, the newly-arrived Tabor Aghassi, Head of the Gendarmerie, went with thirty or forty zaptiehs into Tûl, on his way to Amadia. Mar Shimon had sent a man with his companion to Tehoma, to tell Tehoma to let the zaptiehs pass. Without any provocation of any kind, the zaptiehs fired on a village, killed two men, and wounded a boy and two women, all of whom were at their work. One of the killed was scorched by the fire from the rifle. Tabor Aghassi was in the rear, and was told that the Tûl men had fired upon the zaptiehs. After, they said that Tehornaii were there, and fired on the zaptiehs, and he returned to Julamerk, and thence to Van to give his account to the Vali. The zaptiehs had been overheard to say that they would not go to Amadia to die of heat and to fight; they would make a row on the road, and say they had been fired upon. Tûlnaii are Ryats, and without guns. Mar Shimon was commissioned to examine into the Tûl affair and report to the Vali; so that Mar Shimon is now receiving some honour, thanks to me, I think, and to my letters to the Consul, which I am not to send any more of.

I forgot to say that in June, on their way from Mosul, Tâlnaii were robbed of their mules and everything on the mules by Kurds of Amadia. The Kaïmakam of Amadia and his Council refused redress. The Sheikh and his Council said it was revenge for the other Sheikh's sheep, but if they would turn Mussulmans they would restore the mules and give them a good village with water.

Tiari allowed Haji Agha's band to pass north again, on condition that they would not plunder the Christian Ryats; but, four or five days ago, some of his men plundered a fold in Leevin, and wounded some guardians. The guardians seized two of the thieves but let them go again, because if they gave them up to justice, possibly no redress or punishment would be awarded, and certainly the Kurds would take severe revenge. Tiari and Haji Agha wanted to make a compact, offensive and defensive, but the Pasha heard of it and sent word to Mar Shimon and to Haji Agha not to do anything till he came.

About twenty days ago, sheep of 120 or 150 houses of Ashcetha were in "zozanee" (pastures) in some Artuchnaii county, or near it in security, because Ashcetha had done no fighting nor plundering. The son of the above-mentioned Meera taught the Kurds (Gogaii and Sindaii) to steal these sheep. They killed two men and four women, one of whom fell on his son and killed him, and two women have recovered from their wounds. One of the women, wife of Yaklanes, the Reis of Ashcetha, had received twenty-five blows from "hanjars" (daggers.) One woman was ripped up, and the hand of her unborn child was found protruding from the wound. Yaklanes and Kasha Dukha are here now. Tiari wants revenge on the Meera, and gathered their army at Ashcetha. But now they hear that all the Kurds are gathered against them and they fear invasion.

The new Mutassarif Pasha came here on Friday. He seems a nice man and disposed to be friendly to Mar Shimon. It is now agreed that he send ten zaptiehs (with the Tiari men returning from here) to sit in Ashcetha and over-awe the Kurds. *The Vali is to come here from Van. He is a harsh and oppressive man, but the new Mutassarif appears right-minded. Mar Shimon has been just throughout all this complication.* But he ought to have told the Mutassarif to telegraph to the Kaïmakam of Amadia to send zaptiehs to the Kurds (or to Ashcetha) so that zaptiehs should not learn the Tiari roads. Many Tiari men want to refuse a passage to the zaptiehs.

In all these affairs, the Tiarii have sometimes been in the wrong, but the bother of the whole mischief is the continual plunder by the Kurds and *the acquiescence of the late Vali of Hekkiari and the connivance or worse of the authorities of Julamerk.*

The Kurds are continually sending telegrams to Constantinople and making out that the Christians are in fault. The Porte and the Ambassadors do not know the facts. How thankful our Government ought to be that, at first, from my sense of what was right, and now from obedience to the Archbishop, no such tales as the above have appeared in the "Times!"

I hear that the Kurds have blocked the road from Mosul, so that merchants cannot come with things I want to buy.

Sunday night, August 19.—News has come that on Friday the Kurds pillaged Gundiktha, a village of Kurds who are subjects of Umra Iktaia, and so allies or subjects of Tiari.

Fifteen thousand Kurds are reported to be already in arms.

Kasha and Reis Yaklanes, of Ashcetha and Gegoo, came to me this morning and want you to telegraph to our Queen.

I do not know whether you can telegraph to the Archbishop.

In the spring there was fear that the Kurds would also come and destroy us and the other Ryats. I feel we ought to do something if we can that will at least show some sympathy and desire to help these unfortunate people who are in imminent danger, and who say that, now that the battle has begun, the presence of the zaptiehs will be no protection. They also fear that the [? illegible] is in agreement with the Kurds about this affair.

I think that the Mosul Government are secretly consenting to the projected attack in the spring; and now that the Tiari folk can be shown to be to some extent in the wrong, I daresay the Van Pasha would not be sorry to have the Christians decimated and thoroughly reduced. But I do not see what our country can do till too late.

Kochanes, August 19, 1888.

Inclosure 5 in No. 88.

The Rev. W. H. Browne to the Rev. Canon Maclean and the Rev. A. H. Lang.

(Extract.) *Kochanes, August* 23, 1888.

THERE has been no fighting as yet, but the Tehoma and Tiari men are gathered near Ashcetha and the Kurds in Berner. Mutassarif Pasha agreed that he would go with Nimrod and they two would disperse the two armies. Now to-day he wants Nimrod to go alone, because he says he must wait for the Vali, who is expected to-day. Also there is news that two regiments of Askers are following the Vali. Doubtless they are for Tiari, as they would say the quickest route to the scene of danger is viâ Tiari. Of course, Tiari cannot, even if it ought, hold the road against the Asker expedition, as there is an overwhelming force of Kurds ready to fight in Berner. Nimrod says it is no use for him to go to Tiari and try to get Tiari to go to their homes, unless the Kurds scatter at or before that. He is also afraid that if he goes down to Tiari and yet there is a fight, the Osmanlis will put it on his neck or on Mar Shimon's. Also he fears that the soldiers on their way will revenge Tiari and not only disarm the Tiari men. I suppose that, unless there is a mistake, Tiari will be disarmed, and probably the Kurds will not be, so that the Ashiret country will become, like Leevin and Berner near here, a prey to the Kurds and their will.

Nimrod wants me to bear witness that he wishes to scatter the Tiari men, but does not see how he can if the Kurds are encamped in front; that he is most unwilling that there should be any fighting at all or any resistance to the Government. I feel sure that he is quite sincere in this. Is there anything that we can do to prevent the wrecking of Tiari by Kurds or by Government troops? Of course, a letter would take such a long time to get to England, still it might do some good, as the affair may not finish so quickly, though I suppose it will begin at once. The Osmanlis have got the Tiari men in a trap, and they will not let them off without slaughter and ravage, I feel convinced.

Mar Shimon and Nimrod have sent messengers, and done all they could to prevent fighting, but there have not been adequate measures on the other side to hold the Kurds. It is the Kurds who want to fight now. Tiari and Tehoma want to go to their homes. I find that at the fold of Ashcetha, of which I wrote to you, the Kurds ravished all the women, and killed and wounded some of them. This is a new feature in mountain affrays. It is aggravating to think we must not send a telegram to a daily paper.

Nimrod does not wish his name to appear in telegram or letter.

Inclosure 6 in No. 88.

Dr. Shedd to Consul-General Abbott.

(Extract.) *Oroomiah, August* 25, 1888.

I INCLOSE a letter just received from Mr. Coan, written two days ago in Kochanes. It explains a telegram that we are sending. Mr. Browne is also in Kochanes, and Canon Maclean gives you the view of the case from his standpoint.

The emergency seems so pressing to prevent massacre, that I have consulted with Canon Maclean, and now send a telegram. I can only add the hopes that the dreadful news of massacre may not come, and that you may be the means of averting such a calamity.

Inclosure 7 in No. 88.

Mr. Coan to Dr. Shedd.

My dear Dr. Shedd, *Kochanis, August* 23, 1888.

WE came on here to Kochanis. We had heard rumours of trouble down in Tiary, but here got full particulars, and they are sad and terrible. Their import is such that I send Benjamin down immediately as a special messenger to you with the following particulars:—

A band of Kurds came up by stealth on to the Ashcetha "zozanee" (pastures). There were only women with the flocks. They took off 12,000 sheep, outraged and killed all the women, cutting one woman to pieces, and killed, besides, a small child.

This is more than man can stand, and so the Tiary people went to see what could be done, and found that the Kurds, certain of revenge for such an attack, were combining in immense numbers to completely destroy Tiary. Ikhoma has been warned, and Ikhoma, with the Apinshai Kurds, are now united with the Tiary people for the defence of their homes. It looks like a gigantic thing, as thousands and thousands of Kurds are gathering for war; it is but a fulfilling of the plan laid out in the spring. I heard two of the letters sent from Tiary, and in both the poor people are making an urgent appeal for help, and state that the beginning was by the Kurds, and they are anxious to prevent bloodshed, but will fight when it is necessary.

Worse than all, it looks strongly as if the Turkish Government was at the bottom of the whole thing, and helping the Kurds. The telegraph is in their hands, used only for their own purposes. No one can put a telegram through here now. The Pasha is encamped above here, and to-day the Vali comes. Mar Shimoon and Nimrod tell me that they are acting very suspiciously, and there is good reason to expect foul play. Troops are being collected, and there is great fear that, while the real object is concealed, the Government is covertly abetting the whole thing. All communication with Mosul is cut off by the Kurds, so that their plans may not be known. Mar Shimoon says the Government is so treacherous and rotten that there is no reliance in them. If Nimrod goes down to Tiary to scatter the people, they will only fall an easy prey to the Kurds. If there is a fight while he is there, the Government will say he precipitated it, and he is at a loss. Mar Shimoon and Nimrod say, that God brought us here just at this crisis when we are greatly needed for advice, and as witnesses to the truth. The Government, as a pretext for apathy, or even active help to the Kurds, are trying to lay the blame upon the Nestorians. We, who happen to know the truth, know how matters lie. I can see help in only one way. To appeal to the Government is in vain. To telegraph from here by Turkish lines is useless, so I send Benjamin to you as rapidly as possible, begging you, in the name of Mar Shimoon, Nimrod, and this Christian people, to telegraph immediately to the Consul at Tabriz, asking him to telegraph to Constantinople immediately, that other Powers interfere in behalf of the Nestorians. Benjamin will arrive Saturday. Write Dr. Holmes and the English Consul the particulars, and have them do something at once before it is too late. Nimrod says, if an answer, or some word can come to the Turkish Government here, or at Amadia, within six or ten days, ordering them to disperse the Kurds, it may serve the whole of Tiary, Ikhoma, and the Mountains. He says he can hold the Nestorians in check, if we only can hold back the Government, or the Government the Kurds. . . . . The English Consul had better telegraph through Russia, not Turkey. All that is needed is orders from Constantinople for the Government to interfere, and let them know that Christians can't be massacred in the nineteenth century without arousing a Christian world.

I am, fraternally,
(Signed) FRED. G. COAN.

Inclosure 8 in No. 88.

Consul-General Abbott to Canon Maclean.

Tabriz, August 29, 1888.

My dear Maclean,

ON receipt of your telegram I immediately telegraphed to Sir Drummond Wolff, who replied that he had laid the matter before Her Majesty's Government and telegraphed to Constantinople.

The Turkish Consul-General here at my suggestion has also telegraphed to the Pasha of Van, urging upon him the importance of doing everything in his power to pacify the Kurds and for the protection of the Christians. He has also telegraphed to the Porte and to the Turkish Ambassador at Tehran to inform them that he has taken this step.

I have taken copies of Browne's letters and of yours to the Archbishop, and are sending them to-day to Tehran. The originals went on yesterday to His Grace.

Please inform Dr. Shedd that I am also sending Mr. Coan's letter written from Kochanes on to our Minister.

You will thus see that I have done everything in my power.

Please keep me informed as much as possible of all that is going on. Any

expenses to and from Browne I will pay; and if you think it necessary send special messengers on horseback to me. Do not trust too much to Persian telegraph, unless absolutely necessary.

Our Minister at Tehran has taken the affair well in hand, and I sincerely hope that the machinations of the Kurds will be nipped in the bud.

Please be careful and write names of places plainly; there are one or two in Browne's letter I could not make out.

Ever yours, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

No. 89.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to Foreign Office.—(Received October 2.)

My dear Sir, *Lambeth Palace, September* 28, 1888.

I HAVE had forwarded to me in Scotland your two letters, dated the 24th instant, and beg to thank you most sincerely for the steps you describe to have been taken with regard to the communication left at the Foreign Office by Sir Frederick Goldsmid on the subject of our clergy among the Assyrian Christians.

I am most grateful (as all their friends will be), on behalf of our very devoted and able missionaries, for the instructions you have been so good as to give for their protection.

I trust that the representations of Sir William White, to whom we are also much indebted, will be effectual.

Rumours as to the intentions of the Kurds have, I know, been some time in circulation, but the recent aspects of the situation are more formidable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ED. CANTUAR.

No. 90.

Consul-General Abbott to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 3.)

(No. 6.)
My Lord, *Tabreez, September* 13, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch to your Lordship No. 4 of the 8th instant, I have further the honour to inform your Lordship that the condition of affairs in Turkish territory, in the vicinity of the Nestorian Patriarchate, appears to have undergone some improvement, which I trust will be of a durable character.

The Rev. Canon Maclean, writing to me from Oroomiah on the 8th instant, states as follows:—

"Mr. Coan has come from the mountains, and reports the probability of peace. I believe this is greatly due to your prompt action. It has made the Vali of Van (who pretends there was nothing on) send soldiers immediately and take action by telegraph with Mosul. Some of the wavering Kurds, seeing that the Turks had been obliged (no doubt unwillingly) to take measures to protect the Christians, took their side, and thus the balance of power is so even that an invasion is unlikely. The mountain Christians, as well as all of us, cannot be too grateful to you."

My Turkish colleague also confirms the above intelligence as regards troops having been summoned by the Pasha from Van to overawe the Kurds and for the protection of the Christians at Julamerk or Kochanes, the Patriarch's residence.

It is so far satisfactory to note that the Porte's officials in the disturbed districts, after due reflection, came to the conclusion that, for all parties concerned, it would be advisable to remove every obstacle in the way of a peaceful settlement of questions at issue between Kurds and Christians, and it is to be hoped they will continue to give convincing evidence of their sagacity in this respect.

Trusting that my conduct will meet with the approval of Her Majesty's Government, I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

No. 91.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to Foreign Office.—(Received October 5.)

Lambeth Palace, October 3, 1888.

My dear Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge with very sincere thanks your letter of the 29th September, informing me that order has been re-established in Kurdistan, and inclosing a copy of the despatch of Mr. Abbott, dated Tabreez, 8th September.

Our missionaries in those districts have reason to be very grateful to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran, as also to Mr. Abbott at Van, for the promptitude with which effectual representations have been made to the Porte and the issuing of serious instructions secured.

If it had not been for the distinctness with which the claim to protection was enforced by the Foreign Office, there is abundant cause to believe that great disaster was at hand.

The firmness and force with which Her Majesty's Government and representatives have spoken have evidently had that effect which our missionaries (from their knowledge of the people and of the Turkish officials in that country) have always said that such decision would immediately produce.

I hope that now that it is seen that our Government is strenuous in its determination to have order where their subjects are concerned, we shall hear little or nothing more of disturbances.

I beg you to accept my most respectful thanks for your good offices on behalf of our missionaries and the Christians, and have, &c.

(Signed) EDW. CANTUAR.

No. 92.

Sir H. Drummond Wolff to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 8.)

(No. 186.)

Gulahek, September 13, 1888.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 170 of the 4th instant, I have the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, reporting the dispersion of the Kurds in the neighbourhood of Kochannes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. DRUMMOND WOLFF.

Inclosure in No. 92.

Consul-General Abbott to Sir H. Drummond Wolff.

Tabreez, September 4, 1888.

Sir,

THE post from Urumiah came in this morning, and I have the honour to communicate, for your Excellency's information, the following extract of a letter addressed to me by Canon Maclean, and of another which I have received from Dr. Holmes, embodying the contents of a letter written to him by Dr. Shedd.

Canon Maclean states under date of the 1st instant: "Very many thanks for your letter of 29th August, and for your prompt action. We thought such an important matter would justify our troubling Her Majesty's Government. No more news; I will let you know at once when there is."

Dr. Holmes states: "Dr. Shedd writes under date of 1st September that Mr. Coan has returned from Kochannes, and that the Vali acted promptly on receipt of the telegrams, and that the Kurds have for the present, at least, disbanded."

"Dr. Shedd and Mr. Coan both write in strong terms their appreciation of successful efforts to prevent a massacre. . . . . I hope this will be the last of the trouble."

Your Excellency will thus see that the steps which you were good enough to take in telegraphing to Her Majesty's Government and to Constantinople have produced the desired effect.

I still think that a letter from your Excellency to Her Majesty's Representative at Constantinople, requesting him to impress upon the Porte that it is necessary to keep a very vigilant eye upon passing events in Turkish Kurdistan, will be further productive of beneficial results of a permanent character.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. G. ABBOTT.

No. 93.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 8.)

(No. 363.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 22, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 346 of the 4th instant, stating that the Grand Vizier had promised to telegraph to the Vali of Van respecting the alleged intention of the Kurds to massacre the Christians in the neighbourhood of Kochannes, I have the honour to inclose translation of a telegram from that functionary, copy of which has been communicated to me by His Highness.

The Vali states that beyond the usual cattle raids, and four or five cases of manslaughter, nothing has occurred which is likely to excite one party against the other. It is, he says, a pure invention that the Kurds intend to massacre the Christians, and there is now perfect tranquillity in the district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 93.

Halil Pasha to the Grand Vizier.

(Translation.)

I WAS requested on the 20th August by the Ottoman Minister at Tehran and the Consul-General at Tebreez that the tribes on one side should not be allowed to cross the frontier in order to carry out their intention of massacring the Nestorians in the neighbourhood of Urmiah. Having previously learned that there was enmity between the Kurds and Nestorians, I lately made a tour of inspection to Chuzmerek, and ascertained that beyond the usual cattle raids, which go on from time to time, and except four or five cases of manslaughter on either side, there was nothing likely to excite one party against the other. It is a pure invention that the Kurds intended to massacre the Nestorians, and as the ordinary cases of theft take place in Chuzmerek, which is far from the Persian frontier, no attack has been made on the village of Urmiah, but there is now perfect tranquillity, and all necessary measures have been taken to reconcile the conflicting parties. This is the real state of the case, and the allegations to the contrary proceed from calumniators.

(Signed) HALIL, *Vali of Van.*

August 24 (September 5), 1888.

No. 94.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 8.)

(No. 380.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, October 1, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a Memorandum, drawn up on the 24th ultimo by Colonel Trotter, on the subject of the recent disturbances in the Nestorian Mountains.

Since this Memorandum was written I have received information from Sir Drummond Wolff that his Excellency has news from Kochannes, of date 1st September, to the effect that the Governor-General of Van had acted promptly, and that the Kurds were for the present at least disbanded.

I have also received your Lordship's despatch No. 286 of the 24th September, inclosing, with other documents, a Memorandum drawn up by the Rev. Mr. Brown, of date 19th August, which was not included in the papers to which Colonel Trotter had had access.

Although there does not appear to be any danger of a general massacre such as at one time appears to have been anticipated, I have have not failed, as instructed by your Lordship's despatch of the 24th instant, to urge the Porte to take effectual measures for the protection of the Christian population in Kurdistan and the Nestorian country; and I beg to inclose a copy of the note addressed by me, and should like to know whether your Lordship wishes me to take any further steps at present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 94.

Memorandum respecting the alleged Ill-treatment of Christians by Kurds.

I HAVE carefully read through various letters and telegrams that have been shown to me on the subject of the reported disturbances and ill-treatment of Christians in the Nestorian Mountains.

It is clear that there was no foundation for the alarming reports of a proposed raid on the part of the Turkish Kurds across the Persian frontier, with the object of massacring the Nestorian Christians in the neighbourhood of the Persian town of Oorumiah, but it would appear from Mr. Brown's letters, and from the Report of the Governor-General of Van, that there may be some cause for anxiety on account of the disturbed relations between Kurds and Christians in the heart of the Turkish Nestorian districts. It is well known that the mountain or tribal Nestorians, as distinguished from the non-tribal Nestorians of the plains, have never been thoroughly subdued by the Turkish Government, and there are many places where the Turkish tax-gatherer dares not show his face. It seems that about the middle of August the Nestorians of the mountain districts of Tiyari and Tehoma were assembled in arms near the villages of Asheetha and Ligan, lying to the west of Tiyari, and that a large force of Kurds, estimated by the Rev. Mr. Brown at the very improbable number of 15,000 men, were collected with hostile intent in the Berwari district, still further to the west. The Governor-General of Van was then hastening to the scene, followed, it was said, by a couple of battalions of infantry. In the Rev. Mr. Brown's letter from Kochannes of the 23rd August it was stated that the Vali was expected to arrive on the following day, and on the 5th September we have the Vali's report of his having visited the disturbed districts, and declared that there was nothing serious in the state of affairs.

It seems that the Nestorians fear that the Turkish Government may seize this opportunity of consolidating their power in the Nestorian mountain districts—a not unlikely contingency, and one for which the Government are hardly to be blamed, provided the auxiliary Kurds are kept within proper restraint, a most difficult proceeding even with the most well-intentioned Governor. It would also seem that the Nestorians contemplate resistance to the Turkish troops by force; in which case there will probably be much bloodshed.

It is, of course, very difficult to get at the truth on these matters, especially with the scanty details supplied. The Rev. Mr. Brown's letter * of the 19th August, shows by internal evidence that he was imperfectly informed as to the state of affairs, and that his statements must be received with caution. The Report of the Vali is probably still more unreliable.

It is unsatisfactory to find that we have no Reports from our Vice-Consul at Van upon the above proceedings.

(Signed) HENRY TROTTER, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

Constantinople, September 26, 1888.

Inclosure 2 in No. 94.

Note Verbale.

HER Majesty's Embassy has the honour to thank the Sublime Porte for its courtesy in unofficially communicating to it the telegram from the Vali of Van, dated 24th August (5th September), relative to the state of affairs amongst the Nestorian and Kurdish population on the Persian frontier near Urumiah.

* I allude to the *letter*, not to the *Memorandum* of the 19th September, which I have only seen since the above was written.—H. TROTTER.

Her Majesty's Embassy ventures to hope that should there be any danger of disturbances in this or the neighbouring districts the Sublime Porte will take measures for the protection of the Christian inhabitants.

Therapia, October 1, 1888.

No. 95.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 395.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October* 11, 1888.

WITHIN the last two years I do not remember a single fact affecting the Ottoman Empire equally important with the Concession just granted to a German Syndicate for a railway line to be constructed from Ismidt to Angora in Asiatic Turkey.

The pecuniary requirements of the Treasury were so great and urgent that, unless the Kaulla combination had succeeded, both the new loan and this Concession would have fallen into French hands, bringing on the reprehensible consequences described by me in my despatch No. 291, Confidential, of the 1st August (towards the end).

It was to avoid this danger that Baron Blanc, M. de Radowitz, and Dr. Busch had written to their Governments descriptions on the subject of the preponderance of French capitalists, and that I believe Count Hatzfeldt approached your Lordship.

It is to be hoped that both English and Italian capitalists will be willing and able to take a considerable share in these new Asiatic railways, and should the irritation produced amongst Parisian capitalists continue, and lead them to take up an obstructive attitude, of which there are some indications, it is probable that efforts will be made to create another foreign bank at Constantinople with German and English capital, and thus combat the present monopoly of the Imperial Ottoman Bank and its French supporters.

It is not, however, my intention to trouble your Lordship with any further remarks which may find their proper place in a financial Report; but what I wish to do at present is to point out the political importance of the encouragement given by Germany to the investment of German capital in Asiatic Turkey, and this is not only interesting because hitherto the Imperal Chancellery had not shown any disposition in that direction, but also because it is said that Baron Bleichröder was not disposed to separate himself from the French houses with whom he co-operated in the Ottoman Régie, and notwithstanding his opposition, M. de Radowitz has throughout shown a warm and praiseworthy zeal in making the Kaulla scheme triumph over its French competitors, whose exclusion is a *sine qud non* at Berlin of the present scheme, and of the future scheme in Turkey which may be evolved from it.

My attitude throughout has been, as your Lordship is aware, a perfectly neutral one, although I was kept constantly informed of what was going on by my German and Italian colleagues.

Baron Blanc, although great credit is due to him for the original idea, has not sufficient influence here to bring it to bear successfully on such a question, but he assisted considerably in its development, and holds all along that for its success, and for the purpose of counteracting any Franco-Russian schemes at Constantinople, it is essential that it should not be a purely German scheme, but one in which English and Italian capital should have an active participation and proper weight and influence.

I am sure that the political appreciation of such a result will meet with your Lordship's approval, and it would be a pity that the abstention of British capitalists were to deprive us of this favourable opportunity of making our influence felt with allies in Asiatic Turkey, a result which, I admit, I did not consider as probable as within our reach a few months ago.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 96.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received November* 3.)

(No. 411.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October* 18, 1888.

ON the receipt of the inclosed despatch from Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan, I instructed Sir A. Sandison to bring to the notice of the Grand Vizier the reports which had come to Colonel Chermside's knowledge as to hostile attacks and reprisals between Kurds and Nestorians, and the consequent dispatch of two battalions intended to act against the latter.

His Highness stated, in reply, that, to his knowledge, perfect tranquillity prevailed over the country where the disturbances are supposed to have taken place, and that under the circumstances he could give no credence to the reports mentioned in the despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 96.

Colonel Chermside to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Erzeroum, October* 2, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that about a month ago a Staff Officer left this station for the Sandjak of Hekkiari, capital of Bashkalah, owing to reported trouble in that district.

I have received no news on the subject from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, but have heard here that two battalions have been sent against Mar Shimun's Nestorians.

It is stated that in the first instance some Kurdish tribes plundered some Nestorian flocks, and that thereupon Nestorians, it is asserted under Mar Shimun's directions, attacked and pillaged Kurdish villages. Khurshid Pasha, the Mutessarif of Bashkalah, was placed in arrest, but has been released; he is said to have been favourable to the reported proceedings of Mar Shimun's Nestorians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

No. 97.

Memorandum communicated by Rustem Pasha, November 14, 1888.

VERS le mois de Septembre dernier, le bruit avait été répandu que les Kurdes Ottomans préparaient une incursion du côté de Tiary et de Tchoman (frontière Persane) dans le but d'y massacrer les Nestoriens.

Ces rumeurs se sont trouvées être fausses; mais elles avaient produit une vive émotion et donné lieu à une échange de correspondances officielles.

Il résulte de l'enquête faite par les autorités Impériales que ces bruits ont été mis en circulation par deux missionnaires Anglais, nommés Maclean et Brown, qui se trouvent, le premier à Ourmiah (Perse), et le second à Koraks (Turquie).

Comme il paraît évident que les agissements du Dr. Brown jettent le trouble dans les esprits et peuvent provoquer de fâcheux incidents, sa présence à Koraks ne peut avoir aucun bon résultat.

Le Chef religieux des Nestoriens, dont il est l'hôte, le verrait volontiers abréger son séjour dans le pays; et le Gouvernement Ottoman de son côté, croit devoir porter ces faits à la connaissance de Lord Salisbury, et de lui demander de prendre des mesures pour l'éloignement de ce missionnaire.

Londres, le 12 *Novembre*, 1888.

No. 98.

The Marquis of Salisbury to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

My dear Lord, *Foreign Office, November* 14, 1888.

THE Turkish Ambassador has brought me the inclosed from his Government.* As far as I can gather they have not a high opinion of Mr. Brown's discretion, and apprehend danger from his efforts. But I know so little of the details that I could simply reply that I should refer the matter to your Grace.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 99.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received November* 15.)

(No. 448. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November* 10, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 136, Commercial, on the subject of the Kaulla Railway Concession, I venture to call your Lordship's attention to the accompanying extract from Mme. Adam's "Nouvelle Revue," from which it appears that that pro-Russian organ considers the acquisition of this important railway line by German capitalists as a severe blow to French interests in the East, and at the same time it identifies completely the Imperial Ottoman Bank with French influence, justifying in this way all the suspicions entertained on this point (see my despatch No. 98, Commercial, of the 21st July).

I am not thoroughly informed whether the transfer of their interest in these Asiatic lines by the Kaulla group to their English associates has been actually completed, as I had been assured by Mr. Caillard was going to be the case, and all kinds of rumours are rife at Galata on the subject; but I cannot help expressing a deep conviction that we have a real national interest in securing, at least, an important share in the construction and working of these lines, the loss of which I would sincerely deplore, and which, I hope, may be still averted by British capital coming forward to share in an enterprise which has not presented itself for many years under such favourable circumstances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 99.

Extract from the "Nouvelle Revue" of November 1888.

LETTRES SUR LA POLITIQUE EXTÉRIEURE.—A l'aide de ses manœuvres multiples l'Allemagne procède à son installation complète et définitive sur les rives du Bosphore. Le Gouvernement Ottoman ne vient-il pas de concéder à une Compagnie de Berlin la ligne Ismidt-Angora. C'est l'un des coups les plus sensibles portés à notre influence, car la Banque Ottomane était sur les rangs. Elle s'était crue maîtresse du terrain, et pendant que nos agents se chamaillaient pour des vétilles, un ordre est venu de Berlin qui enjoignait à M. de Radowitz d'enlever la place à notre barbe. Or, c'est la mainmise de l'Allemagne sur toute l'Asie-Mineure, peut-être même sur la vallée de l'Euphrates et sur la côte de Syrie. Le Gouvernement Turc est tellement aux abois qu'il ne sait plus se défendre.

No. 100.

Sir W. White, No. 137, *Commercial, Confidential, November* 10, 1888.

[This is identic with Sir W. White's No. 448, Confidential: *ante*, No. 99.]

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* No. 97.

No. 101.

Mr. Caillard to Foreign Office.—(Received November 20.)

Sir, 116, *Buckingham Palace Road, London, November* 19, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that one of the best financial houses which I had interested in the Concession for the construction of the new line to Angora has received a communication giving them clearly to understand that the moment the Company is formed to construct this line Mr. Charles Morrison, who is the gentleman who advanced money to Mr. Alt for the working of the existing Haïdar-Pasha-Ismidt line, will bring an action against the Company, claiming 200,000*l.* I have felt bound myself to inform the other financiers who have undertaken the carrying out of the Concession for the construction of this line in combination with the Deutsche Bank of this threat.

I am advised that, were Mr. Charles Morrison to bring such an action, he would immediately be nonsuited, as the action cannot lie against the new Company, but would be against the Turkish Government. This, however, does not alter the fact that such a step on the part of Mr. Charles Morrison would so greatly damage the business in the eyes of the public, that it would probably cause any issue upon the English market of bonds or shares of the new Company to fail; and, as a matter of fact, it would probably cause the ruin of the English interest in the Anglo-Italian-German group formed to construct the Asia Minor Railways, which I have been trying so hard to establish.

I beg you to note that this threat has been conveyed, in spite of my undertaking to do my very best to induce the Turkish Government to appoint a Commission, on which themselves and Mr. Alt should be equally represented, to discuss the various claims and counter-claims arising between Mr. Alt and the Turkish Government, the decision of such Commission to be considered final. Should the Commissioners fail to come to any agreement, the whole matter to be submitted to a Supreme Arbiter, whom the Commissioners should appoint, and whose decision would in that case be the final one.

Mr. John Morris, who is the solicitor to Mr. Charles Morrison and Mr. Alt, informed me personally that he will accept this Commission as being a reasonable arrangement. Nevertheless, it is subsequently to his having so informed me that I hear of this threat made on behalf of Mr. Charles Morrison.

I submit that the Commission I propose is the only possible way of arriving at a settlement of the claims of Mr. Alt. It is manifestly out of the question that the new Company should saddle its Concession with a large sum of money to be paid to Mr. Alt in consideration of taking over claims which he asserts he has against the Turkish Government, and which the Turkish Government contest.

With your approval I intend, in spite of the position taken up by Mr. Alt and Mr. Charles Morrison, to endeavour to induce the Turkish Government to appoint the Commission which I have above described; and I venture to suggest that it would be well to instruct the English Ambassador at Constantinople to use his best endeavour to have that Commission named. I would also beg to suggest that Mr. Alt should be informed that if he persists in refusing so reasonable an arrangement, and in doing all he can to damage the interests of the new Company, in spite of their conciliatory disposition, the support of Her Majesty's Government will be immediately withdrawn from him; and, further, that in any case that support is contingent upon Mr. Alt's being able to prove to their satisfaction that he has suffered at the hands of the Turkish Government a clear and substantial injustice.

I am leaving London this evening for Berlin, where I shall probably remain two or three days, and thence I shall proceed direct to Constantinople. I shall be extremely obliged if you will be good enough to inform me as soon as possible of your views on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) VINCENT CAILLARD.

No. 102.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 21.)

My dear Lord, *Addington Park, Croydon, November* 19, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's letter of the 14th November, with the inclosure from the Turkish Embassy.

In reply to the statement that untrue rumours as to the threatening preparations of the Kurds for an attack on the Christians emanate from our missionaries, I beg to inform your Lordship that two English travellers have just returned from the scene of the incidents—Mr. Riley and Dr. Cholmondeley (an English physician).

They state that they themselves actually found the Tyari (Christian) Chiefs assembled at Kochanes, deliberating as to how they should defend their people from the vast muster of the Kurdish tribes.

They state that the Kurds had in the first instance made a terrible attack on the Christian women (300) and a few shepherds, who had gone with the flocks as usual to the uplands. They violated the women and killed many.

The Tyari people had then assembled, and the Kurds, on the other hand, had mustered in very great masses, armed with Martini rifles.

At this moment the British Representatives promptly intervened, and in consequence Turkish troops were sent in all directions and to great distances through the country to disperse the Kurds.

The two English travellers themselves were present when the Vali of Van himself, with his troops, arrived at Kochanes. He received the travellers kindly.

The state of the case was notorious and visible, but the Vali courteously denied to them the existence of what they saw and the motive of his own presence. They also visited him at Van, and were entertained by him. The facts were patent. They are perfectly well known to the French and American missionaries, as well as to our own.

I would call your Lordship's attention to Mr. Abbott's despatch of the 8th September last, in which he says: "The Kurdish army which threatened their (the Christians'), safety has dispersed."

Your Lordship is aware that the Turkish officials on the spot objected to the presence of Mr. Russell, who took an interest in the Christians. I believe that he has been removed. The Turkish officials are not likely to approve more of Mr. Brown's presence or to consider him discreet, but I feel certain that his departure would be the signal for oppression, which has largely ceased since he went to live at Kochanes.

We are also able to deny that the Patriarch Mar Shimoon is wishful (as the Memorandum states) that Mr. Brown should leave his country. He keeps him in close companionship with himself (and with his designated successor), and is most anxious that he should not leave. He not only states this in writing, but the two travellers have within the last two months seen how much he values his presence and how grateful he is to England, from which he and his people have for the last forty years asked the boon of a resident teacher.

Mr. Riley and Dr. Cholmondeley are drawing up a Memorandum, which I shall have the honour of forwarding to your Lordship.

Mr. Riley would attend your Lordship at any moment to give his personal impressions, or, if that is impossible, perhaps your Lordship would allow him to wait on Sir James Fergusson.

And I would particularly request that instructions might be given to Colonel Chermside (to whom the Kurdistan district is assigned) to make inquiries on the spot and to report the facts to your Lordship.

I have endeavoured to put the main facts before your Lordship as shortly as I am able, but must apologize, I fear, for the length of my letter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDW. CANTUAR.

No. 103.

Colonel Alt to Foreign Office.—(Received November 21.)

Sir, 14, *Queen Victoria Street, London, November* 20, 1888.

I AM advised from Constantinople that in order to give a plausible excuse for taking immediate possession of the Haïdar-Pasha to Ismidt Railway, the Turkish

Government will probably shortly put forward the plea, that by being unable to transfer immediately to the Deutsche Bank the existing line, they will run the risk of losing the opportunity presented to them by the Concession granted to that institution of securing the construction of the railway to Angora.

To meet this contention, and being still unable to obtain from the Turkish Government a copy of the Convention for the extensions of the railway granted to Mr. Kaulla in the name of the Deutsche Bank, to which, under our right of preference, we are entitled, and a copy of that Convention having been published in a local paper in Constantinople, I have, assuming it to be correct, submitted it to the friends acting with me, and have telegraphed to our representative on the spot to inform the Grand Vizier that if such publication is the correct text of the Convention, we will accept and carry out all its conditions.

I have also written to Mr. Pears, who legally represents the locataires, instructing him to follow up this telegram by a formal communication addressed to the Turkish Government in confirmation thereof.

I have ventured to tell you this for the information of his Lordship, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in order that if deemed desirable his Excellency Sir William White may be made acquainted with the fact for his guidance in meeting any statement to the effect anticipated which may be put forward by the Sublime Porte.

I have, &c.
(For the Locataires of the Imperial Haïdar-Pasha to Ismidt Railway),
(Signed) W. J. ALT.

No. 104.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

Foreign Office, November 26, 1888.

(No. 354.)

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a copy of a letter from Mr. Caillard upon the subject of the recent Concession for the extension of railway communication in Asia Minor, and Colonel Alt's attitude in regard to it.*

I also annex a copy of the reply returned to this communication.†

It appears very desirable that speedy measures should be taken for an equitable decision on the questions in dispute. Unless, therefore, your Excellency should see reasons to the contrary, I think it would be desirable that you should press the Porte to arrange without delay for the examination of the claims of the present lessees of the Haïdar-Pasha-Ismidt Railway by a properly constituted Commission.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 105.

Foreign Office to Mr. Caillard.

Foreign Office, November 26, 1888.

Sir,

YOUR letter of the 19th instant upon the subject of the Concession recently granted by the Porte for the extension of railway communication in Asia Minor has been received and laid before the Marquis of Salisbury.

The intervention of Her Majesty's Government on behalf of the lessees of the Haïdar-Pasha Railway is confined to the protection necessary to secure the interests of the British investors from arbitrary treatment at the hands of the Porte.

But it appears desirable, in the interests of all parties, that a speedy decision should be arrived at on the merits of the question in dispute, and Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople will be instructed, if he sees no objection, to urge on the Porte the expediency of arranging for an examination of the claims of the lessees by a

* No. 101

† No. 105.

properly constituted Commission—a method of procedure to which it is understood that Colonel Alt is himself quite ready to agree.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 106.

Memorandum by Mr. A. Riley respecting the recent Outrages on Christians in Kurdistan, and the Residence of the Priests of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission in the Province of Hakkiari, lately incorporated with that of Van.—(Received December 3.)

Geographical and political position of the Assyrian Christians.

THE Assyrian, Chaldean, or Eastern Syrian Christians are divided into the subjects of Turkey and the subjects of Persia inhabiting the country lying on the frontiers between these three points—Lake Urmi, Lake Van, and the town of Mosul.

The Turkish Assyrians are either Ashirets, tribal, dwelling in confined valleys, semi-independent of the Imperial Government, or Rayahs, non-tribal, dwelling in the plains and exposed valleys, completely under the officials of the Porte.

In Persia all the Assyrians are non-tribal, inhabiting the great Plain of Urmi.

The Supreme Head, spiritual and temporal, of the whole Assyrian people is the Patriarch Mar Shimoon, Catholicos of the East. He resides at Kochanes, in Turkey, is recognized by the Provincial Government, and receives a small annual salary from the Porte. He has, however, no representative or Vekil at Constantinople, and no means of communicating directly with the Central Government.

The Kurds.

The Assyrian Christians are surrounded on all sides by the Kurdish tribes, and perpetual struggles have been going on between them for centuries. The Christians are numerically the weaker, and also worse armed than the Kurds. Since the Russo-Turkish war a large proportion of the Kurds are armed with Martini and other modern rifles; the Christians rarely possess any better weapon than the old flint-lock musket, swords, and light wicker targets or shields; thus they are only safe within their valleys, which serve as fortresses into which neither Kurds nor Turkish troops penetrate.

Turkish officials. Oppressions.

The Rayahs, or non-tribal Assyrians, are entirely at the mercy of both Kurds and Turkish officials. Their lot is a very hard one. It is true that murders and outrages on women are comparatively rare, but they have to submit to every kind of injustice and tyranny. The state of things may be best described as follows: the Kurds rob the peasants of their sheep, money, irrigation water, in fact, of all their property, no protection is afforded by the Government, which, when the taxes are due, and the unfortunate Christians are unable to pay them on account of the Kurdish robberies, severely punishes them for their inability.

The Ashirets, or tribal Assyrians, are in a somewhat better condition. They are secure within their valleys, and pay less taxes than their brothers of the plains (the amount of their taxes was fixed when the Porte first occupied the country more than eighty years ago), but the area of land capable of cultivation within their valleys is very small; they are therefore obliged to pasture their flocks outside their valleys and to obtain corn from the neighbouring plains. The Kurds take advantage of this to carry off their flocks, and the local Turkish Governors, by preventing caravans from entering the valleys, starve the tribes into paying such tribute as they think fit to demand. I cannot say for certain that they are thus made to pay more than the agreed tax, but the mountaineers are so miserably poor that it is difficult to understand how they can pay any taxes at all.

The outrage of 31st July last.

This summer the sheep of Ashitha, the largest village of Tiari, were being fed in a "zoma," or mountain pasture, outside Tiari, in charge of between 200 and 300 women and girls and 2 men. On the 31st July the encampment was suddenly surrounded by a large body of Kurds, the two men were killed, all the women and girls violated, five were killed, one pregnant women being ripped open, the child protruded, and one slowly put to death by twenty-five dagger wounds (I saw the husband of this woman, Rais Yakhanis), four others wounded, and the rest stripped entirely naked and left in that state to make their way back to Ashitha. So terrible an outrage has not occurred since the massacres of Bedr Khan Beg in 1843. The object of the outrage was clearly to draw on the Tiari tribe to attack the Kurds, and this happened; the men of Tiari prepared to avenge the honour of their women. To meet them there assembled the Kurdish tribes Gougaii, Zercknaii, Berwarnaii, and Sindaii, the authors of the outrage, together with others in overwhelming numbers, 15,000 it is said; I cannot say the number was as large as this, though I am satisfied that it must have been at least 10,000. The Tiari tribesmen

then gave up all idea of avenging the honour of their women, feeling themselves, even with the assistance of the neighbouring Assyrian tribe of Thooma, unable so much as to defend the entrance to their valley. The Turkish authorities had shown no sign of interfering up to the end of August, when the Rev. W. H. Browne, of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission, who had been stationed in Hakkiari since November 1887, and who is, I believe, the only European of any kind in the province, fearing a massacre, sent a special messenger across the frontier to Canon Maclean, the Head of the Mission at Urmi. The Canon instantly telegraphed to Mr. Abbott, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, and, I believe, the other Missions in Urmi, *i.e.*, the French and the American, telegraphed to their representatives.

The Vali of Van was communicated with through the Turkish Representatives at Tabreez and Tehran, and, I believe I am right in saying, denied the existence of any troubles in Hakkiari. However that may be, the Turkish authorities then took steps to disperse the Kurdish army, and when I was at Kochanes on the 13th September I found the Vali of Van had himself arrived some days before with a body of troops to pacify the country. I visited him, and, in the course of conversation, he told me that he had also sent troops in the direction of Berwar, near Ashitha.

All the Chiefs of Tiari, about twenty in number, were assembled at Kochanes during my visit to that village last September. I had the opportunity of talking to them collectively and individually.

Purchase of Christian villages by the Kurds from the Turkish Government.

The Assyrian Christians have held their lands from time immemorial, and on this title have been allowed to hold their property since the Turkish occupation. Recently, because they possess no title-deeds, the Turkish authorities have been selling Christian villages to Kurds, which means a gradual expatriation of the Christians. This occurred principally during 1885 and 1886.

Relations of the Archbishop of Canterbury's clergy with the Assyrians.

The Archbishop's Mission is an educational one, sent out in 1886 at the request of Mar Shimoon, the Assyrian Bishops, and the people. It is non-proselytizing, aiming simply at the education of the people without detaching them from their Church. No work of any kind is undertaken amongst the Mahommedans, the English clergy having strict orders to confine their labours entirely to the Assyrians. The present Mission priests are :—

Rev. Canon Maclean, M.A., late Scholar of King's College, Cambridge.
Rev. W. H. Browne, LL.M., of St. John's College, Cambridge.
Rev. A. H. Lang, M.A., late Scholar of St. John's College, Oxford.
Rev. A. R. Edington, M.A., of Worcester College, Oxford.

Three of these priests are working in Persia, where they have large schools and colleges. The fourth, Rev. W. H. Browne, has resided in Turkey since November 1887, at the special request of the Patriarch Mar Shimoon and the Metropolitan. In 1884 and 1886, when I was visiting the country, both Patriarch and Metropolitan urged me to persuade the Archbishop of Canterbury to send a clergyman to reside in Turkey, as the mere presence of an European in the province would be a protection to them.

Since Mr. Browne took up his residence at Kochanes as the guest of Mar Shimoon, the Turkish authorities have used every endeavour to dislodge him, have subjected him to every species of annoyance, and have even punished Mar Shimoon and his people for harbouring him. This spring, finding that the Patriarch's salary had been unpaid since his arrival, and his host otherwise harassed and threatened, Mr. Browne asked Mar Shimoon whether he had better not leave Kochanes and return to Persia. The answer was that the Patriarch and his people must put up with the increased annoyances of the Government as best they could, for they desired him to stay, as his presence might save them from a massacre. This prediction was remarkably fulfilled in the circumstances connected with the outrage of last July.

The Patriarch further told Mr. Browne last spring to write to the Archbishop of Canterbury asking him not to believe any report that might be sent to England from Constantinople. That he and his people wished to have him amongst them, and that any statement to the contrary effect, purporting to come from him, would be either a fraud or extorted from him by force, he being absolutely at the mercy of the Vali of Van.

Apparent policy of the Porte.

I have visited the Province of Hakkiari on three different occasions, in 1884, 1886, and during last autumn (1888). With few exceptions I have travelled through all the districts inhabited by the Christians, and I am personally acquainted with most of their chief men. I have made careful notes during my visits, and have watched the changes in the condition of the country during the last four years.

I cannot come to any other conclusion but that the Porte has determined upon the destruction of the people as a race; that the Kurdish oppressions are not only connived at, but even instigated, by the local Governors (often Kurds themselves, as Fikri Pasha, the late Vali of Hakkiari, and the present Kaïmakam of Julamerk); and that their destruction will be accomplished partly by forcing them to emigrate to Persia and Russia, partly by massacre, such as the one undoubtedly projected this summer.

In the interests of the Assyrian Christians, three things seem desirable :— Desirable measures.

(*a.*) The recognition of the Assyrian Christians as a distinct religious community, with a representative at Constantinople.

(*b.*) The establishment of schools amongst them. At present there are but few Assyrians that can speak Turkish, the official language, and the Patriarch and his Council are ignorant of the rudiments of Turkish law, knowing neither how to formulate their grievances, nor how to seek redress. Indeed, it would be difficult to find an Assyrian of sufficient education to act as representative as suggested in recommendation (*a*). It is impossible to exaggerate the helplessness of the people in this respect.

(*c.*) The residence in Hakkiari of a Consul or other Representative of some European Government. At the present time, not only are there no Consuls nearer than at Mosul and Van, both outside the Assyrian country (and a British representation at the latter town alone, the Mosul Consulate having been lately suppressed), but if Mr. Browne were to leave the country I think I am correct in saying there would not be a single European of any description in the province.

(Signed) ATHELSTAN RILEY.

2, *Kensington Court, W.*,
December 1, 1888.

Note by Dr. H. P. Cholmeley.

Having accompanied Mr. Athelstan Riley on his visit to Kurdistan this autumn, I am in a position to corroborate his information concerning the outrage of the 31st July and its attendant consequences.

The facts rest upon the following data :—

(*a.*) The general consensus of testimony from all quarters, natives in Persia and Turkey, the English Mission, and the French and American Missions at Urmi, so far as they received information from their independent agents in Hakkiari.

(*b.*) The unanimity of detail in this testimony.

(*c.*) The evidence of Mr. Browne, whom I saw at Kochanes, and who was resident in Hakkiari throughout the whole of the disturbance.

(*d.*) The evidence of the Tiari Chiefs who were assembled at Kochanes to consult as to the measures to be taken for the safety of their tribe, and some of whom were the husbands and fathers of some of the outraged and murdered women.

(*e.*) The evidence of the Patriarch Mar Shimoon and his family.

(*f.*) The presence near Julamerk of the Vali of Van and his troops. His Excellency acknowledged that there had been a disturbance which he was there to quell, though he affected to make light of it.

As to the numbers of the Kurdish force assembled against Tiari, all accounts agreed in putting them at 15,000; but I cannot say from my own knowledge of the country whether or no these numbers are probable.

Mr. Riley puts them at not less than 10,000, basing his calculation upon his knowledge of the strength of the Tiari and Thooma tribes, whose country he visited in 1886, upon which occasion I was not with him, though I was in 1884.

Taking into consideration the natural strength of their position, their aptitude for war, and the number of fighting men they can raise, he thinks that not less than 10,000 Kurds could have reduced these Tiari Chiefs to the state of terror they were evidently in when we met them at Kochanes.

As far as my information goes, I entirely concur in the conclusions Mr. Riley has drawn from the facts, and the recommendations he has made thereon.

(Signed) H. P. CHOLMELEY, M.B.

No. 107.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 368.)

Foreign Office, December 4, 1888.

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador called here on the 27th ultimo, and stated that he was instructed to request that orders might be given to stop the publication of an Armenian paper, which is published in London, and incites feelings of discontent and disaffection among the Sultan's Armenian subjects.

I explained to his Excellency, in reply, that Her Majesty's Government had not the power to stop by Executive authority the publication of a newspaper on account of the political views which it may advocate.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 108.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 375.)

Foreign Office, December 10, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 411 of the 18th October last, relative to reports of hostilities between the Kurds and Nestorians, which are discredited by the Turkish Government, I transmit to you herewith a copy of a Memorandum which was delivered to me by Rustem Pasha on the 14th ultimo, in which these reports are attributed to the Rev. Mr. Browne;* and Her Majesty's Government are requested to take measures for removing him from Kochanes, where he is now residing with Mar Shimoon, the spiritual Head of the Nestorians.

I also inclose copies of correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury on the subject, and of a statement drawn up by Mr. Athelstan Riley and confirmed by Mr. Cholmeley, two English travellers who have recently returned from the districts in question.†

It will be seen that these gentlemen entirely corroborate the information previously received from Mr. Browne, and from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, as to the events which have occurred, and as to the danger which at one time existed of still more serious disturbances.

It would be desirable to obtain as soon as possible a report from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van on the subject, after which it may be a matter for consideration whether Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum might with advantage be directed to visit that part of the country in the ensuing spring.

I have in the meanwhile addressed to Rustem Pasha the inclosed reply.‡

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 109.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 376. Secret.)

Foreign Office, December 10, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 375 of this day's date, relative to outrages committed by the Kurds on the Nestorian population in the Tiari district, I transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a letter from Mr. Athelstan Riley, which appeared in the "Globe" newspaper of the 1st instant, together with copies of a question asked in the House of Commons by Mr. Staveley Hill on the 6th instant, and of Sir James Fergusson's reply.

It may be well, if the subject should be alluded to in conversation by any of the Turkish Ministers, that you should explain that the matter has attracted public attention here, and that any attempt to remove the Rev. Mr. Browne from Kochanes will undoubtedly lead to a demand for presentation to Parliament of the whole correspondence. The publication of the Reports would produce a very painful impression in this country.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

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* No. 97. † No. 106. ‡ No. 111.

No. 110.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Malet.

(No. 302.)

Foreign Office, December 10, 1888.

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a collection of printed correspondence which has taken place between this Office, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and the Evangelical Alliance, on the subject of religious liberty in Turkey, and the ill-treatment by the local authorities of the Trebizond Vilayet of an Armenian Protestant teacher named Nicolaki Effendi.*

It will be seen, from my despatch No. 293 of the 29th September to Sir W. White, that I have concurred in the view expressed by his Excellency, to the effect that it is desirable that the Representatives of other Protestant Powers at Constantinople should be asked to unite with Her Majesty's Embassy in any unofficial representations which it may be thought advisable to make to the Porte on behalf of the native Protestant community.

As regards the case of Nicolaki Effendi, a Petition drawn up on behalf of the Protestant community was forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador, and to the United States' Minister, for presentation to the Grand Vizier, and Sir W. White advised that a copy should be sent with a similar request to the German Embassy. It appears, moreover, that the Evangelical Alliance contemplated pressing for the issue of instructions from Berlin in connection with the general question of religious liberty in Turkey, and I think it therefore right that your Excellency should be in possession of the correspondence which has taken place on the subject.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 111.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Rustem Pasha.

Foreign Office, December 10, 1888.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

I HAVE been in communication with the Archbishop of Canterbury on the subject of the Memorandum which your Excellency did me the honour to leave with me on the 14th ultimo, requesting that Her Majesty's Government would take steps to remove the Rev. Mr. Browne from Kochanes, where he is residing as the guest of the spiritual Chief of the Nestorians.

The grounds on which this request is made are that Mr. Browne has disseminated false reports as to a threatened attack by the Kurds on the Nestorians, and that the Chief of the Nestorians would himself be glad if Mr. Browne's stay could be brought to an end.

I think it right to inform your Excellency that the independent accounts which have been received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, and from Mr. Riley and Dr. Cholmeley, two British travellers who have recently returned from a tour in the localities in question, entirely confirm the reality of the danger at the time, though it may now be considered at an end, owing to the arrival of the Vali of Van with a considerable body of troops.

Messrs. Riley and Cholmeley state that before the arrival of the Vali, outrages of the most atrocious character had already been committed by the Kurds, and they add that Mar Shimoon, the Chief of the Nestorians, so far from desiring the departure of Mr. Browne, has earnestly requested that he will remain with him.

Under these circumstances, I cannot help thinking that your Government has been misinformed. I shall be happy to obtain a further Report from our Consular officers in the neighbourhood of the spot, but I do not feel that I should be justified, in the present state of my information, in further pressing upon the Archbishop of Canterbury the wish of the Porte that Mr. Browne should withdraw from Kochanes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

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* Sir W. White, Nos. 167, 243, 351, 404; to ditto, Nos. 293, 360; Evangelical Alliance, June 29, November 13 and 26; to ditto, July 3 and November 20, 1888. (See Appendix.)

No. 112.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received December* 13.)

(No. 487. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 8, 1888.

A FEW days ago the new Armenian Patriarch called upon me, and, after compliments, alluded to the irritation produced in high quarters here in consequence of the publication in London of an Armenian newspaper called "Le Haiasdan," a circumstance of which I had heard previously.

The Patriarch then mentioned the Armenian nation, and that he had every reason to believe that the Sultan was animated by the most benevolent intentions towards those of his subjects who belong to it; but his Beatitude added that he was afraid that the tone adopted by his co-religionists domiciled in England might interfere with the realization of any kind intentions on the part of the Sultan.

I agreed in this with his Beatitude, and suggested that, as the legal Chief of the Armenian Gregorians under Ottoman rule, the Patriarch might think it proper to use any influence he might naturally possess with his countrymen in England, for the purpose of inducing them to abstain from making use of irritating language.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 113.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 386.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 17, 1888.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 487, Confidential, of the 8th instant, reporting a conversation you had had with the Armenian Patriarch relative to the irritation produced at Constantinople in connection with the publication of an Armenian newspaper called "Le Haiasdan;" and I approve of your having urged his Beatitude to use his influence with his countrymen in this country with a view to inducing them to abstain from making use of irritating language.

The question of the "Haiasdan" was referred to a short time ago by Rustem Pasha, and in consequence of his Excellency's representations a Report was obtained from the Metropolitan Police on the subject, a copy of which is herewith inclosed for your confidential information.

From this Report it will be seen that the newspaper in question is published not in London, as stated, but at Paris, and in the French language.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 114.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received December* 27.)

(No. 504.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 19, 1888.

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 189 and 196 of the 7th and 11th May repectively, on the subject of the arrest and trial of a Protestant Armenian at Erzeroum, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship a further communication which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting that a sentence of exile for life has been passed on the prisoner.

This sentence has been appealed from to Constantinople, but as such a procedure may last a very long time in this country it would be extremely hard on a prisoner, whose sentence is exile, to be kept in close confinement during the whole period when this appeal is pending.

I concur with the view expressed by Colonel Chermside that the case is not one in which we can interfere by official representations, but the American Minister has likewise received a report from the United States' Consul at Erzeroum, and takes a warm interest in this and similar cases. We have agreed to take such unofficial steps as we properly may to obtain the liberation of this prisoner on bail pending the trial of his

cause in appeal, when it is hoped the sentence may be revised in such a way as to be considerably mitigated.

Of course, even then there would remain an appeal to mercy.

The present sentence is out of all proportion to the offence, and is evidently due to the fear of the local Judges of being suspected of indifference in a political cause.

I believe that my American colleague, Mr. Straus, has spoken to the Grand Vizier, and I have instructed Mr. Stavrides to exert himself unofficially in furthering the same object, and I hope in doing this I shall meet with your Lordship's approbation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 114.

Colonel Chermside to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Erzeroum, December* 6, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the trial of an Armenian (Protestant) school teacher under the circumstances described in the despatches of the 19th April, 26th April, and 14th May has concluded.

The pupil teacher mentioned in despatch of the 4th April died in prison in the month of August.

After reference of the preliminary "dossier" to Constantinople the trial of the school teacher took place here. He has been sentenced to exile for life.

I consider this sentence of quite uncalled-for severity under the circumstances; but I quite agreed with the views of the late Acting Consul that it was not a case in which it would be judicious in any way to interfere, nor in view of the reference to Constantinople would such local interference have been likely to have any desirable result.

The Rev. W. Chambers, however, your Excellency will remember, wished the Acting Consul to interfere, and his manner and remarks to myself have given me the impression that he considered such action a duty which my predecessors would not have neglected. I have therefore thought it right to give your Excellency my opinion as above.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

No. 115.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received December* 27.)

(No. 510.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 22, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout respecting the corruption in the administration of the district of Lattakia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 115.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Beyrout, December* 8, 1888.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a despatch, Confidential, of the 24th ultimo, which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Vitale complaining of the abuses and corruption existing in the administration of the district of Lattakia.

An opportunity having presented itself, I brought the substance of the complaints, without entering into details, to the knowledge of Ali Pasha, the Wali, and his Excellency promised me that he would cause secret inquiries to be made on the spot, but that, in any case, the present Mutessarif would not remain more than a month in his present post.

I was careful to conceal the name of my informant, as M. Vitale, being a land-owner in the district, might find his interests compromised if it were known that he had furnished me information. I therefore told Ali Pasha that I had obtained it from one of my correspondents.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 115.

Vice-Consul Vitale to Consul-General Eldridge.

(Confidentielle.)
M. le Consul-Général, *Lattaquié, le 24 Novembre*, 1888.

VOUS n'ignorez certes pas que depuis quelque temps la situation de ce Mutessariflik laisse trop à désirer, que le Mutessarif, Djevdet Pacha, ne s'occupe des affaires que fort peu à moins qu'il n'ait un intérêt personnel, et que l'administration de la justice est bien loin d'être satisfaisante.

Cependant, je crois devoir vous soumettre mon présent rapport, par lequel je me permets non seulement de vous confirmer ce qui précède mais encore de vous affirmer que la situation va pire que jamais, et de vous soumettre des faits que je tiens de bonnes sources.

Comme sécurité publique il n'y a pas deux mois que deux assassinats et plusieurs vols ont eu lieu à deux ou trois heures de distance de cette ville, et je regrette de dire qu'ils ont passé comme inaperçus par les autorités locales.

Le premier assassinat a eu lieu au village de M. Morcos (Agent Consulaire de Russie), et pendant qu'il y était; le deuxième dans ma propriété, où il a été suivi du pillage de la maison d'un fermier.

Ce serait trop long de citer tous les vols qui ont lieu, mais je ne puis pas m'empêcher de faire mention d'un seul; celui d'une paire de bœufs que mon susdit collègue (M. Morcos) avait fait venir d'Antioche, et que les voleurs ont arraché à son employé à main armée à une très petite distance de la ville.

M. Morcos a été lui-même prier le Mutessarif d'envoyer quelques gendarmes dans l'espoir d'attraper les voleurs et lui rendre ses bœufs, mais son Excellence a décliné la demande sous prétexte qu'il lui faut une requête en règle pour que le Tribunal puisse être saisi et lui donner un mazbata à cet effet.

Ne pouvant faire autrement, M. Morcos a fait présenter la requête et ce n'est que trois jours après que son employé fut appelé auprès du Juge d'Instruction pour faire une première déposition sur cet incident.

Dans cet intervalle les voleurs ont eu naturellement tout le temps de traverser la montagne et aller vendre les bœufs à Hama ou ailleurs, tandis que M. Morcos perdait son temps à remplir des formalités.

Aussi je crois devoir vous informer d'une manière confidentielle que le Mutessarif, qui jouit déjà d'une grande réputation de subornation, est actuellement accusé d'être d'accord avec son Tabour Agassi (Major de Gendarmerie), Hassan Aga, et un certain Cheikh Youssif Zoubari, un fameux brigand Ansaryéh, et qu'ils partagent les vols

Ceci provient de ce que le Mutessarif a toujours une grande répugnance à poursuivre les voleurs, et qu'il a beaucoup de sympathie pour le Tabour Agassi, et que celui-ci est intimement lié avec Zoubari.

En ce qui regarde l'administration de la justice, je puis affirmer qu'elle est pire qu'on ne peut le croire. En vous soumettant un seul fait vous jugerez de ce qu'il en est.

Un pauvre étranger nommé Zogorti avait fait une action au Tribunal; il lui fut insinué de donner quelques livres au Juge, Mohammed Effendi Turk, pour terminer son affaire, ce qu'il fit de bon cœur; malgré, cela il lui a fallu rester des mois entiers sans réussir. Impatient il entra un jour au Tribunal et demanda à Mohammed Turk, en présence du Cadi, Président du Tribunal, de lui rendre son argent puisqu'il ne finissait pas son affaire. Ce dernier lui répondit sans aucune honte qu'il n'avait pas d'argent, mais qu'il lui donnait une assignation sur la caisse.

Zogorti ayant pris l'assignation se rend au bureau du Mohassibdji où se trouvait le Substitut, le leur raconta ce qui s'est passé en ajoutant qu'il était Musulman et étranger, et qu'il ne demandait plus que la grâce de toucher cette assignation pour pouvoir partir.

Touché de son langage le Mohassibdji lui donne l'argent, mais le Cadi et le

Substitut ont passé sous silence cet incident tout grave et tout compromettant qu'il était.

Par ce qui précède vous pouvez juger, M. le Consul-Général, des principaux fonctionaires de ce Mutessariflik et comment se font les affaires dans toutes les branches de l'Administration de ce pays.

Je dois vous soumettre également que je m'aperçois que depuis quelque temps on cherche à purger les bureaux de l'autorité locale de l'élément Chrétien.

Aussi, tout Chrétien qui fait une action contre un Musulman par-devant les Tribunaux est sûr de la perdre et les protégés Européens sont les plus mal traités.

Ceci étant aperçu par les Musulmans de cette ville fait qu'ils deviennent plus fanatiques et quelques fois très arrogants dans leurs transactions avec les Chrétions.

Pour rémédier à tout ceci il faudrait changer non seulement le Mutessarif mais encore le Cadi, le Réys Djeza, le Substitut, et le Tabour Agassi; ce qui, du reste, ne me paraît pas probable dans les circonstances actuelles mais ce qui est vraiment nécessaire.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) N. VITALE.

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APPENDIX.

Correspondence respecting the Election of a Vekil for the Protestant Community in Turkey.

No. 1.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 5.)

(No. 167.)

Constantinople, April 26, 1888.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of a communication which I have recently received from Mr. Sellar, Chairman of the Constantinople Branch of the Evangelical Alliance, complaining of the refusal of the Porte to recognize the election of a "Vekil" or Civil Head for the Protestant community in Turkey, and stating that the Director of Religious Affairs was of opinion that the new Vekil should be regarded as the representative of those native Protestants only who reside at Constantinople.

Having caused inquiries to be made at the office of the Directeur des Cultes as to the truth of these allegations, I learnt that the Evangelical Alliance was altogether mistaken respecting the intentions of the Sublime Porte, as the Director thinks that the Vekil should be on exactly the same footing as his predecessor, and should be regarded as representative of the whole Protestant community of the Empire.

I have informed Mr. Sellar of this fact, and also of the action I had taken in requesting the Grand Vizier to defer the confirmation of the Vekil already elected by the Notables until the Protestants had come to an understanding amongst themselves.

I inclose two Memoranda on this subject by Sir A. Sandison and Mr. Block, from which your Lordship will perceive that whilst carefully abstaining from any interference in the dissensions of the rival Protestant sects in this country, I have expressed my willingness to give my unofficial support towards the confirmation of a Vekil as soon as one should have been selected by the community.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 1.

Constantinople Branch of Evangelical Alliance to Sir W. White.

Constantinople, April 9, 1888.

Sir,

YOUR Excellency is already aware that the Imperial Government has refused to recognize the election of a Vekil or Civil Head for the Protestant community in Turkey, made by the National Council duly chosen for the purpose of this election; and, further, that it has taken into consideration the names of candidates for this office presented to the Porte by certain individuals residing in this city, who have not, nor assume to have, any representative character whatever as regards the Protestant community at large.

It has now been brought to our knowledge that the Director of Religious Affairs (Mezahib Mudiri), in stating the reasons for the above action, has informed members of the National Council that, while their right to elect a Vekil would be unquestioned were that officer regarded as the Head of the whole body of Protestants in the Empire, the Imperial Government does not admit that he should be so regarded, inclining rather to the opinion that the Vekil should be considered as the representative of those Protestants only who reside in Constantinople.

We need hardly remark that any such limitation of the duties or the privileges of the Protestant Vekil is an innovation; at variance with the terms of the first Vezirial letter, recognizing the existence of a Protestant "Millet" or nationality in Turkey (obtained by Lord Cowley in 1847); at variance with the Firman obtained by Lord Stratford

de Redcliffe in 1850, which gives the community the right to elect a Vekil, whose seal must be appended to all documents concerning the Protestant community presented to the Sublime Porte; at variance with the Imperial Hatt, appointing the first Vekil of the Protestant Millet or nationality (in 1853); and at variance also with the custom of the Sublime Porte since that time in always addressing the Vekil as the Vekil of the Protestant Millet, in furnishing the successive Vekils with the seal of "the Protestant Millet," in giving to the Vekil repeated and written assurances that the Protestant nationality stands on an equality as to privilege with the other nationalities of the Empire, and in assigning to himself personally, even in the presence of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, a place on the same footing with the Greek and Armenian Patriarchs, the Grand Rabbi, and other Heads of non-Moslem nationalities.

The Evangelical Alliance throughout the world, in its lively interest in the principle of religious liberty, cannot fail to view with deep concern the adoption by the Sublime Porte of any policy which tends to destroy the organization of this community, and to deprive it of the precious liberties and the honourable position obtained for it through the intervention of Her Majesty's Government, and so often and ably defended by the predecessors of your Excellency in your illustrious office.

We would, therefore, without delaying to bring this matter to the notice of the Councils of the Alliance, solicit your Excellency's good offices with the Imperial Government in defence of the Protestants of Turkey against any infringement of their rights as an organized nationality, by the appointment of a Vekil whose official relations are limited to residents of Constantinople, and in whose selection the community has had no voice, and, on the other hand, in favour of their right to elect, by their duly authorized representatives, a Vekil who shall hold the same official relations and exercise the same functions as the previous incumbents of this office.

Should further information of the new turn of affairs to which we have alluded seem desirable, we shall be happy to wait on your Excellency at any time convenient to yourself.

We remain, &c.
(In behalf of the Constantinople Branch of the Evangelical Alliance),
(Signed) WILLIAM SELLAR, *Chairman.*
AVEDIS CONSTANTIAN.
HENRY O. DWIGHT, *Secretary.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 1.

Memorandum by Sir A. Sandison.

I HAVE the honour to submit that, under the provisions of the Firmans granted to the Protestant community, the native Protestants have the unquestionable right of electing their own Vekil as the representative of the whole community *throughout the Empire*. Therefore, if the Merzahib Mudiri has actually stated that the Vekil, in the opinion of the Ottoman Government, should be regarded as the representative of those Protestants only who reside in Constantinople, then the Protestant community of the nation at large has no representative at all. This point, however, must be clearly elucidated, namely, whether and in what manner the Merzahib Mudiri has made the above statement, or if he merely said that the Vekil to represent the nation should be elected by the Notables of Constantinople instead of by the National Council.

I beg to add that, in accordance with your Excellency's instructions, I have asked the Grand Vizier to postpone the election of a Vekil until the Protestants settled their differences in regard to the mode of election; and we have since been waiting for information as to the arrangement they have come to.

To my knowledge, at least, the Imperial Government has not pressed any further the reappointment and confirmation of the Vekil already elected by the *Notables*, who would certainly, in the opinion of the said Notables at least, represent the whole nation.

(Signed) A. SANDISON.

Pera, April 13, 1888.

Inclosure 3 in No. 1.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

WITH reference to the communication from the Evangelical Alliance of the 9th April concerning the election of a Protestant Vekil, I have the honour to state, referring

first to the Minute on your Memorandum of the 13th April, that I have ascertained at the office of the Directeur des Cultes (Merzahib Mudiri), that the Sublime Porte does *not* hold that the Vekil elected and appointed shall be considered as Vekil for the Protestants of Constantinople only, but holds that he shall be the Vekil for the Protestants of the Empire; he shall be on the same footing as the former Vekil, Agop. Effendi. Having ascertained this, which is in direct contradiction to the statement which forms the basis of the communication of the Evangelical Alliance, I asked Mr. William Sellar, the Chairman of the Constantinople Branch of the Alliance, to call at the Embassy, and I informed him of the above fact, and then of all Her Majesty's Embassy had done with regard to the nomination of a Vekil; and amongst other things, of the fact that Sir A. Sandison had asked the Grand Vizier to defer the confirmation of the Vekil already elected by the Notables, viz., M. Boyadjian, until the Protestants had come to an agreement amongst themselves; and that his Excellency the Ambassador could not interfere in the differences unfortunately existing amongst the Protestants themselves, although his Excellency was prepared to lend them such unofficial support as he properly could when the community had decided on their Vekil, in order to have this election confirmed by the Porte.

Mr. Sellar admitted that he did not know all that had passed, and that he would inform the Evangelical Alliance, which, like Her Majesty's Embassy, took a broad view of the question, and declined to interfere in the differences existing in the community, however much it might regret their existence. Mr. Sellar said the Branch Alliance did not intend that such great importance should be attached to their communication which they had been induced to make, not knowing thoroughly what had already passed on the subject between Her Majesty's Embassy and the Porte, in consequence of a deputation to them on behalf of a number of native Protestants.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

Pera, April 19, 1888.

No. 2.

Mr. Stronge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 30.)

(No. 243.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June* 22, 1888.

WITH reference to Sir W. White's despatch No. 167 of the 26th April, I have the honour to report that, by his Excellency's direction, Mr. Block had an interview with the Grand Vizier on the 22nd ultimo respecting the difficulties which have arisen in regard to the election of a Protestant Vekil.

Mr. Block urged the necessity of the Porte taking some decision as to the mode of election, and His Highness showed a very favourable disposition in the matter.

I have the honour to inclose copy of Mr. Block's Report of his conversation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS STRONGE.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

I HAVE the honour to state that I have asked the Grand Vizier yesterday if it was true, as Dr. Alexandrian has informed Her Majesty's Embassy, that the election of M. Boyadjian as Protestant Vekil, which Sir A. Sandison had begged His Highness not to recognize for the present, had been sent to the Palace for the Imperial sanction. His Highness said such was not the case. Djevdet Pasha had sent the papers to him, but His Highness had returned them.

I then said to His Highness that it appeared desirable to decide upon the mode of election of a Protestant Vekil, which is uncertain and disputed by the Protestants themselves.

That your Excellency thought that as long as they think they have a grievance they will perpetually ask the British Government to appeal on their behalf, but if the Porte decided once for all the mode of election of a Vekil representing the Protestants of the Empire, they will have no just cause for complaint. I asked His Highness if he would consent to receive a deputation or a Memorandum on the part of some of the leading Protestants of the Empire. (I refrained from using the word "National Council," as I knew that the Grand Vizier and the Sublime Porte denied its existence.)

These would submit to His Highness their views as to the mode of election supported by precedents or by arguments, and His Highness would then, by himself or after consulting his Ministers, decide as to how the Vekil should be elected. His Highness approved the idea, but said that such an application should probably be made through Djevdet Pasha, Minister of Public Worship, and there would be no objection to make it.

I have the honour to add, in conclusion, that His Highness throughout the conversation listened to everything I said with great interest and patience, and appeared to me to show a friendly disposition with regard to the election of a Vekil.

(Signed) A. BLOCK.

Pera, May 23, 1888.

No. 3.

Evangelical Alliance to Foreign Office.—(Received June 30.)

7, Adam Street, Strand, London, June 29, 1888.

Dear Sir,

THE Council of the Evangelical Alliance instruct me to send the inclosed copies of letters recently received from our Constantinople branch, and from a missionary at Erzeroum in Turkey. Both these communications show that there is great need for watchfulness in regard to the action of the Turkish authorities in the matter of religious liberty.

Our Council are glad to know that Lord Salisbury has called the attention of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to the subject, and the accompanying documents are sent for your information.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) A. J. ARNOLD, *Secretary.*

Inclosure 1 in No. 3.

The Rev. Dr. Dwight to Evangelical Alliance, London.

Constantinople, April 27, 1888.

(Extract.)

MEANWHILE, another matter has caused us some anxiety. The Protestant community, after long delays, was at last authorized by the Government, as you know, to proceed to the election of a Vekil, or Civil Chief of the community. The Council of the community, composed of representatives chosen by the Protestants in the different provinces of the Empire, obtained authorization from its constituencies to proceed to the election of a Vekil, and after the delay incident to this obtaining of formal powers, it held its election. Professor Hagopos Djedjizian was duly elected Vekil, receiving 11 votes out of the 17, or two-thirds of the 16 votes cast (one member of the Council being absent). The Turkish Government declined to recognize the election, putting forward the claim that the authorization to elect a Vekil merely contemplated the suggestion of several candidates to the Porte, from among whom the Government would make choice of the Vekil. This claim is subversive of the rights of the community, and has, I believe, been abandoned through the good offices of Her Majesty's Ambassador. But the Porte has found means to prevent, so far, any solution of the question by giving aid to a disappointed candidate for the office, even going to the length of authorizing him to call a meeting of his supporters in this city for the purpose of holding a new "election." The meeting so called, consisting of some thirty persons, of course gave their votes for their leader, and his name is under consideration of the Porte. The Porte is now pleased to call this meeting of men who have no representative character and no mandate from the community, evidence of a division in the community, and has intimated that the election of a Vekil cannot be legal unless the community is united. By this means the Council of the community has been set aside, its legal rights ignored, and the election deferred without day. We consider it to be essential to the maintenance of the rights of the Evangelical Christians of Turkey, that the Vekil be chosen by the legally constituted body of representatives of the community as a whole; and we believe that any interference with this right is, in fact, merely another form of the opposition of the Government to any choice of a Vekil.

Inclosure 2 in No. 3.

The Rev. R. Chambers to Evangelical Alliance.

London, June 13, 1888.

My dear Sir,

I BEG to place before the Executive Committee of the Alliance a few facts bearing upon the condition of the Christian subjects of the Porte in Koordistan. The Turkish Government has had suspicions with reference to the Armenians of the city and surrounding district of Van for years past. Since last fall there has been an excessive development of suspicious feeling on the part of the Government toward Horpoot Diarbekir, Egin, Erzinjan, and Erzeroum, as well as Van. For about five months the officers of the Government have been active in arresting and keeping in confinement Christians of the various districts mentioned. Christian travellers entering by any of the roads leading to the cities above named, or even wishing to go outside of the city, are seized and searched. In case of being found in possession of books or manuscript documents, they are imprisoned until the books and documents may be translated and examined. Often the examination consumes much time, and it frequently happens that a man against whom absolutely nothing is proved is detained indefinitely in prison. I know personally of several such cases in Erzeroum. Of course, it may be that there are individuals who seek for various ends to stir up the Christian populations against the Government, but I am intimately acquainted with the friends and associations and habits of thought of several of the political prisoners, and am sure that the suspicions of the Government in reference to them are entirely foundationless.

Some of the prisoners in Van have been tortured, though both the Government and the Armenian Patriarch (as I understand) deny the charge; others have been, and are being, abused by being cast into unclean cells containing scores of Kurdish and other Moslem ruffians, murderers, &c., who do not fail to vent their evil feelings upon Christians, especially priests and school teachers, who are charged with conspiracy against Mahommedan rule.

A pupil of the Erzeroum Missionary High School was imprisoned about the 1st April last, and on the 19th of that month the head teacher of the school was cast into prison. My brother, Rev. W. N. Chambers, a British subject and missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, is Principal of the school, and we are always very careful that no rule of the Government be contravened in the school. But it happened that the pupil referred to composed a song in which he referred in severe terms to the Turks. This composition he brought to the teacher for correction of grammatical mistakes. The teacher, while making corrections, warned the pupil against such compositions, and ordered him to destroy it. This the pupil failed to do, and the manuscript being found on his person he was imprisoned, and shortly afterwards the teacher was seized. They are both under very close confinement, not being permitted, according to my latest information, to speak even with their guards. The people of the country are in a state of panic.

British influence has been greatly weakened in Kurdistan. The Vice-Consuls are often insulted both by Governors and underlings; and as British influence decreases, the sufferings of the Christian populations increase.

Hoping that through your efforts British influence may be brought to bear for the amelioration of the condition of Christians in Turkey, I am, &c.

(Signed) R. CHAMBERS.

No. 4.

Foreign Office to Evangelical Alliance.

Foreign Office, July 3, 1888.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge with thanks your letter of the 29th ultimo, with its inclosures, relative to the state of affairs in Kurdistan and to the question of the appointment of a Vekil for the native Protestant community in Turkey; and I am to inform you that copies of these papers will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 5.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received September 22.)

(No. 354.)

My Lord, *Therapia, September* 11, 1888.

REFERRING to Mr. Stronge's despatch No. 243 of the 23rd June last to your Lordship concerning the election of a Protestant Vekil, I have the honour to state that I have not ceased to press the Porte to proceed to this election in an impartial manner, and in a way satisfactory and acceptable to the community in general.

I am now informed that the election of a certain M. Boyadjian has been approved by the Council of Ministers, and his name has been sent to the Palace for Imperial sanction.

As far as I can learn, M. Boyadjian has the reputation of being a capable, energetic, and influentinl man, yet he does not, unfortunately, meet with the approval of the entire native Protestant community; and a section of the Protestant Armenians has been urging me to induce the Porte to reverse their decision as to this gentleman's election.

Although, as long as it was only the mode of election which was a matter of discussion, I felt able to lend my unofficial support to the community at large, yet when, as now, the matter has become a personal one, I do not consider that my intervention on behalf of either section against the other would be either opportune or efficacious.

In order, however, that your Lordship may, in case of need, be furnished with the views of both parties on this subject, I have asked either party to send me a Memorandum setting forth its views. Of these Memoranda I have the honour to inclose copies; and, unless I receive special instructions from your Lordship, I shall make no further representations to the Porte as to this election.

The result of my non-intervention will be that the election of M. Boyadjian will be approved by Imperial Iradé; and it might be well that the Protestant Armenians should now settle their differences, and should use M. Boyadjian's influence with the Turkish Government to obtain the Constitution they have so long desired, and which they have hitherto been unable to obtain; in that Constitution the mode of election will be settled for the future.

I would beg to add that whilst it is true that Her Majesty's Embassy did succeed in obtaining from the Porte the first recognition of the native Protestants as a separate community, yet it would be, I believe, wiser and more advantageous that, when the community is in need of assistance, the other Protestant foreign representatives at Constantinople should be asked to unite with this Embassy in any unofficial representations which may properly be made.

The right of special protection of the native Ottoman Protestant community does not appear to devolve on Her Majesty's Embassy by any particular Treaty arrangement; and it may so easily lead to misconception, that it ought, if possible, be avoided, on obvious grounds.

In all matters connected with the Protestant cemetery here, the different Powers interested act jointly; and a similar course appears to recommend itself as regards the Protestant community.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 5.

Statement on the Election of a Vekil for the Protestant Community in the Ottoman Empire.

AT the moment when Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy had obtained the consent of the Sublime Porte to the formation of the Protestants in Turkey into a distinct and organized community, with privileges somewhat analogous to those of the other Christian communities in the Empire, His Imperial Majesty the Sultan did not grant to the said community to direct its internal affairs or to define its relations with the Sublime Porte any written Statute or Constitution, nor did the help of Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy in recent years succeed in its attempt to obtain such a Constitution, so that to enable us to form an impartial opinion upon the present difficulties of the Protestant community, the course the Imperial Government countenanced in our preceding elections, as well as custom in other communities during elections, come to be of capital importance.

After the recognition by the Sublime Porte of the formation of the Protestant community, the Notables thereof then residing in Constantinople came together and nominated Stepan Effendi to be their Civil Head, and the Sublime Porte appointed him to the office with the title of "Vekil of the Protestant Community." After his death, which occurred in 1865, four members of the community were summoned to the Ministry of Police, and were asked by a superior official to mention him there and then three or four names of notable members in the community, in order that the Sublime Porte might appoint one of them to be Stepan Effendi's successor. Ghazaros Davood Effendi, his name being one of the three or four then mentioned, was soon after appointed Vekil, but his career as such did not go further than about two years, he being dismissed by the Sublime Porte.

Thereupon the Boylikdji Bey, at that time having charge of the Public Worship Department, requested the attendance in his office of some of the Notables of the community, and, as in the preceding election, asked them to mention him there and then three names, one out of whom would be appointed by the Sublime Porte. These gentlemen requesting time to be able to weigh the matter well, and withdrawing to their office, reported in three names, among which that of Hagop Mattiossian Effendi, who was appointed Vekil.

Thus it is seen that the dominant principle in our preceding elections has been, according to the Sublime Porte, election by the Notables of the community in Constantinople.

My statement would be incomplete were I not to mention here that as regards the last two elections, and in consequence of a certain amount of clique action that had taken place in both, I have been from the first against this way of election, and a strenuous defender of the principle of giving a due share in the matter of election to the Protestants residing out of the capital.

I need to refer only briefly to what concerns the customs of other communities. The Notables of the Greeks, in conclave with ecclesiastical bodies by certain defined methods of voting, elect three candidates whose names are presented to the Sublime Porte, and, if no objection is raised against any of them, the High Synod of the Church proceeds to voting, and whichever of the three names obtains the highest number of votes is declared elected.

As to the Gregorian Armenians, since the last twenty-five years they have a written Constitution granted and sanctioned by Imperial Iradé, by which their House of Representatives is authorized to elect the Patriarch; but before they proceed to do so their Ecclesiastical and Civil National Councils have several meetings separately and conjointly, and finally select three candidates, and the representative body have no right but to elect one of these three. It remains only to mention that the two-thirds of the 180 Deputies are elected by the people in Constantinople.

Mattiossian Effendi continued his office up to 1884, but finding out finally that in consequence of the above-mentioned irregularities in his election he could not secure the co-operation of those in whose help he stood in need he decided to give in his resignation, which, being accepted by the community, was forwarded to the Ministry of Justice and Public Worship.

As we could not see the affairs of the community altogether abandoned and left without any guide, we nominated an Executive Committee composed of seven members, they being residents of Constantinople, to take charge of the affairs of the community. I was unanimously elected Chairman of the Committee, and the first thing we agreed upon was that the former elections of the Vekils having been carried out rather by a party spirit than otherwise, and consequently having had ill results, we would in the next nomination secure the participation of the members of our community residing in the interior, and act in a way to secure general approbation. To this end a Circular, dated the 13th August, 1884, prepared by the said Executive Committee, was addressed to our community throughout the Empire, and copies were forwarded to every city of each vilayet, requesting—

1. That every vilayet having less than 5,000 Protestants should appoint one Deputy, those having more appointing two, Constantinople having also two.

2. That the mode of electing the Deputies should be left to the convenience of each electing centre.

3. At the same time, we advised these people that their appointee be a resident of Constantinople.

The responses to this Circular were both scarce and much apart, so that to complete the list of Deputies we were obliged to send to many vilayets names of gentlemen residing in Constantinople, and urge their election; at the same time, we requested the

Protestants of those vilayets not to elect certain persons whose names we had sent to some other vilayet. In this way we compelled, as it were, each vilayet, or some personal friend of ours therein, to write and say that so and so had been appointed Deputy, and we were glad to deceive ourselves that we had completed the list of Deputies. Thus was our Representative Council formed, after the formation of which the Provisional Executive Committee ceased to exist. I myself having been appointed Deputy of Diarbekir had a seat in the new Council, and was unanimously appointed Chairman. But after a year pressure of personal occupations obliged me to resign both chair and representation.

When near the end of last year, permission was granted by the Sublime Porte to nominate a successor to Mattiossian Effendi. Some Deputies called upon me to know if I would accept the office of Vekil, and which would be the best way, in my opinion, to proceed in the matter of election. I answered my interviewers that on no account could I take upon myself the duties of a Vekil, and as to the second point of their inquiry, I thought the best way would be to take counsel with the Notables of Constantinople, and thus prepare a list of three or four candidates; then the Representative Council would elect one out of these and present it to the Sublime Porte to be appointed Vekil. Besides these private conversations, some Deputies in several sittings of the Council insisted upon the propriety of coming to some understanding with the Notables of Constantinople who were expressing themselves displeased with the course the representatives were intending to adopt, but the majority of the Council refused the conciliatory advice, and the election took place in one and the same sitting without the mention of any candidates, and by majority of votes they elected Professor Djedjizian, of Robert College.

I am reproached with inconsistency that, having refused to acknowledge the last two of the first three elections because they had been carried out by a few called together *ex parte*, I have now turned against an election carried out by a representative body whom I had acknowledged by assuming its chair, by devoting to its cause both time and pecuniary aid; but in assuming the said chair, my intention was to arrive to a medium by giving, on one hand, a due share in these matters to the community out of the capital, and on the other, to conform ourselves with usage and precedents by acting with the co-operation of the Notables of Constantinople—the only system acknowledged by the Imperial Government. It would be running no great risk to think that this last election, though carried out by our representatives, in reality is of the same nature as those of Ghazaros and Mattiossian Effendis. It has about it, to my humble thinking, a deep colouring of party action, and it has shunned, as in the two previous cases, light and publicity. Let me be allowed to repeat that I have desired a representative system of election in order to throw upon it as much light and publicity as possible, but certainly it would have been a great presumption on my part to desire a representative system that is not in accord with the usages of the country, and had not obtained the approval of the Sublime Porte and the sanction of His Imperial Majesty.

It would be but fair here to mention that the Circular above referred to, dated the 13th August, 1884, had informed the community in the Empire that the attributions of the Representative Council to be elected would be to oversee current affairs of the community, and proceed to the election of a Vekil when the due order thereof shall have been received from the Sublime Porte; but the Circular in no wise alludes to the methods to be adopted for the election, and as the formation itself of the representative body had not the sanction of the Sublime Porte, and as the election of the Deputies had taken place, as stated above, in a somewhat shaky way, the said body ought to have taken into consideration the counsels which were tendered, and had it followed the example of other Christian communities in the matter of preparing candidates all the Protestants in Constantinople would have been conciliated, and none of them would have opposed the competency of the Representative Council to elect the Vekil. But as the Council did not act in the way we expected it to do, and more especially as it ignored altogether the rights of the Protestants of the capital as established by usage, some of these last-named protested immediately by a Circular bearing date the 17th (29th) December, 1887, against the proceedings of the Council, and requested the said body—

1. To accept the resignation of the newly elected Vekil;
2. To prepare a list of candidates to the official; and then,
3. To proceed to a new election.

Thus it will be clear that had the Representative Council taken into consideration the claims of the Protestants in Constantinople as far as they go all difficulty would have been removed; but the said Council in its majority insisted on the legality of its proceedings, and presented by a Mazbata the name of Professor Djedjizian to the Ministry

of Justice and Public Worship to be appointed as Vekil. The Ministry rejected to appoint him, and the rejection was based on the ground—

1. That the Sublime Porte has never acknowledged a Representative Council of the Protestants, as no Imperial Iradé has ever been issued to that effect, while the preceding Vekils have been presented by the "Notables" of the community; and,

2. Because in the preceding elections the Notables have presented at least three names, and the Sublime Porte appointed one of them.

For these reasons the Mazbata of the Council was rejected. At the same time, the members of the community who opposed the election by the Council protested, by presenting an "Istida'a" to the Ministry, begging rejection of the Mazbata, and requesting that the rights of the residents in Constantinople may be taken into due consideration.

As what concerns to the rights of the residents in Constantinople there are two important points to be taken into consideration:—

1. As the Vekil resides in Constantinople, naturally the community of the capital have to bear most of the burden of the Vekilate.

2. The Vekil is not only the general Civil Head of the Protestant community throughout the Empire, but also at the same time the special overseer of the local concerns in Constantinople, just in the same way that the Vekils appointed in the other cities of the Empire take charge of the local concerns of the place where they are elected.

Now, in the said cities the local Vekil is elected only by the residents, while, if we admit the view of the Representative Council, we residents of Constantinople shall be obliged to have for our local interests a Vekil elected for us without our participation in one way or another in the election; and while the said Council has no competency whatever to elect the Vekils of the other cities, it ought not to have the right to elect ours without our consent or control.

As I have already mentioned, had the Council admitted this view, and permitted the Notables in Constantinople to have a sort of control in the matter of election, all the difficulty would have been removed. The Council could have published the names of candidates, or could ask some other body to present it a certain number of candidates, and then it could have proceeded itself to the election, but as it did not act in this way there were two parties formed, and those who opposed the election were considered by the Ministry of Justice and Public Worship to be in the right. After the rejection of the Mazbata, the Ministry gave instructions to both parties to come together, and present it two names at least, but the Council insisted on its sole right as electing body, and on the legality of its former proceedings. After a great many efforts on our part to arrive to an understanding with the Council by mutual concessions, or by submitting the pending difference to an arbitration, and especially to that of Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy; seeing that all our offers were rejected by the said Council, and that our efforts of two months had had no results, and seeing also that we could not leave our community without a Civil Head, in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry, we invited all the Notables of the community residing in Constantinople, including the members of the Council, to come and take part in the election of two candidates to be presented to the Sublime Porte. The meeting was gathered, and the two names presented were those of Kapriel Effendi Minassian, a Deputy, and my own, and a Report in this sense was signed and presented to the Ministry of Justice and Public Worship, which considered our election as legal, and altogether in accordance with its instructions.

I venture to think that it will be evident from the preceding lines that our attack has been against the method of the late election and not against representative system, which we respect and would sustain it as long as it would act within the limits of its rights as established by usage and in conformity with customs prevailing in other communities. As mentioned above, I have been from the first moment a partisan of general representation of the whole community, but this representation must respect the unwritten law so long as it has no written law.

As for myself personally, as I have already stated, I did not wish to assume the duties and responsibilities of Vekil on account of my personal occupations, which might be hindered by the office. But the Notables who have presented my name were of opinion that, being personally acquainted with Government officials, I was fit to fill the place, and after much hesitation, *nolens volens*, I could not withdraw myself, at least for the moment, notwithstanding my unwillingness to fill the office. Could there be found a means to settle the question without my becoming Vekil, for instance, if a new arrangement could be made by some reciprocal concessions of the two parties, my person shall certainly not stand in the way.

And now to finish, there is only one point more left, what can be done? I would take the liberty to intimate that there are three methods which might be adopted:—

1. The best way, and which will be a final settlement of the question, and which will prevent all difficulty in the future, is that Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy be pleased to intercede for us to obtain from the Sublime Porte for our community a Constitution sanctioned by His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, and this would be the greatest favour both of His Imperial Majesty and of the British Embassy.

2. To obtain from the Sublime Porte a set of provisional Rules to guide a new election.

3. To let the Sublime Porte judge the question as best it considers.

Most respectfully,
(Signed) A. TH. BOYADJIAN.

Constantinople, Bible House, September 6, 1888.

Inclosure 2 in No. 5.

Memorandum concerning the Choice of a Vekil for the Protestant Community.

INASMUCH as the Vekil is, according to Imperial Firman, the head and representatative officer of the whole Protestant community in the Empire, he ought to be the choice of that community, and not of a part of it.

To secure this, each separate Protestant community in the interior should, as has been done, elect each a representative to choose the Vekil. As the Vekil-elect should be a man who enjoys the fullest confidence of the community as to the ability, religious and civil standing, this Council of representatives should duly meet and cast vote by ballot for the man of their choice, and to secure, as far as possible, unanimity, the man who leaves not less than two-thirds of the votes should be the Vekil-elect.

It may not be out of place to add that this has been done, and the election received almost universal approbation. But it is sad to say unfavourable and unfriendly influences have gone to lead the Sublime Porte to reject the election.

It is needless to add that whatever rights and privileges granted to other communities be denied to Protestants, this right of electing their own Vekil by their own representatives should not be denied. For no Government, much less the Ottoman, will ever deny this to any community whose existence as such has been sanctioned by Imperial Act, nor compel any community to trust their most sacred interests to a man whom they not only did not elect, but even opposed. Why, then, should a man be forced upon a people with whom he has no ecclesiastical connection, nor attends their religious services. To make such a one Vekil would be violating the most sacred rights of the Protestant community, religious as well as civil.

It is hoped the British Embassy, as the old friend of the Protestant community, will not cease to use all proper means to prevent a violation of those rights, the more so, as they were secured by Her Majesty's Embassy long ago, rights which constitute the Protestant community a recognized body, while the violation of which threatens the very existence of the Protestant community.

No. 6.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 293.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 29, 1888.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 354 of the 11th instant on the subject of the election of a Protestant Vekil.

Your action in the matter is approved, and I concur in your view, that it is desirable that in future the other Protestant representatives at Constantinople should be asked to unite with Her Majesty's Embassy in any unofficial representations which it may be thought advisable to make to the Porte on behalf of the native Protestant community.

You are consequently at liberty to seek the co-operation of your Protestant colleagues upon such occasions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 7.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received October* 22.)

(No. 404.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October* 13, 1888.

A FEW days ago the Rev. Mr. Brooks, an English clergyman resident at Constantinople, called at Her Majesty's Embassy and presented a Petition emanating from certain Protestant Armenians, begging that I should take steps at the Sublime Porte on behalf of a number of their community who, it is alleged, are suffering persecution at the hands of the Turkish authorities at Samsoon.

Complaints of this kind would, in the ordinary course, be submitted to the Protestant Vekil, who would be able to bring them to the notice of the Central Government. No Vekil has, however, yet been definitely appointed, and I thought I should, on this ground, be justified in granting the community some assistance in bringing the case before the Porte.

I accordingly caused a letter to be addressed to Mr. Brooks, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, informing him that if the Armenians would draw up a Petition to the Grand Vizier setting forth the facts of the case, and would forward it to the American Legation and to this Embassy, I was prepared on this occasion to assist them in bringing the grievances of the native Protestants before His Highness. I also pointed out that it might be well to send a copy of the Petition to the German Embassy.

The Protestant Armenians accordingly drew up a Petition in duplicate, and forwarded one copy to Mr. King, the United States' Chargé d'Affaires, and the other to myself; they did not, however, apply to the German Embassy.

Mr. King subsequently consulted me in the matter, and it was agreed between us that we should both cause the Petition, of which I herewith inclose a translation, to be presented unofficially to the Grand Vizier, and this was subsequently done.

It appears to me—although under the circumstances I was justified in assisting the Protestant Armenians in bringing a grievance to the notice of the Government—that it would be undesirable that Her Majesty's Embassy should interfere actively in a matter which does not affect the interests of Her Majesty's Government or those of British subjects. I do not, therefore, propose to take any further steps in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 7.

Petition of Protestant Armenians to Grand Vizier.

To His Highness the Grand Vizier:
Highness,

YOUR petitioners humbly set forth the state of Nicolaki Effendi Konzonjak Oglou, an honourable merchant of Alacham (Kaza of Bafra, Sandjak of Janik, Vilayet of Trebizond) and a member of the Protestant community, the most loyal and faithful of the subjects of His Imperial Majesty.

In accordance with the usage and the requirements of his faith, this man has always had prayers in his house with his family; both morning and evening and on Sunday he has had his co-religionists at worship with him, since there is no Protestant church in Alacham. This habit of worship, although permitted by the laws of the Empire, has aroused the bigotry of people who are hostile to the Protestant doctrine. For this reason, such people at different times during the last two years have falsely alleged against Nicolaki Effendi that he has opened a reading-room, that he invites men to be Protestants by the use of money, and that, not being himself a priest, he officiates at weddings and at other religious rites; and the local Government, in order to please those who make these accusations, has imprisoned him repeatedly contrary to the laws, and several times have sent him to Bafra and Samsoun on such charges without the slightest foundation, whereby Nicolaki Effendi has been kept from the pursuit of his mercantile affairs, and subjected to very great hardship and loss. Within two months he has been forced to give security in the person of well-known men of the Armenian and Greek communities at Samsoun that he will not make his house a church, will not open a reading-room, things which he had no intention to do, but only upon his giving security was he released.

A week later the Greek Metropolitan declared that Nicolaki Effendi is a disturber of the public peace, that he is performing religious functions without authority, that he tries to seduce people into becoming Protestants; that he holds a Greek girl concealed in his house, and various similar stories of an entirely fictitious character.

Upon this Nicolaki Effendi was arrested, and sent under arrest to the seat of Government of the Vilayet, where, without trial or sentence, he is now imprisoned.

This accusation is entirely calumnious, and is evidently on the face of it a fabrication of those who are hostile to the religious faith of the Protestants. Hence, that the local authorities, moved by a desire to please the Greek Metropolitan and the people, should repeatedly arrest Nicolaki Effendi, take him from his business, and carry him from place to place in an unhappy condition; and that, after a long period of such conduct, they should put him in prison at Trebizond without trial or sentence, is evidently opposed to the love of justice of His Imperial Majesty and to the glorious laws of the Empire.

Your petitioners thereby beg that Nicolaki Effendi may be restored to his home, that he may be protected from molestation in the worship of God according to the rites of his Church, and that the officials who have wantonly caused an honourable man so much pain and grief and loss be made to feel the consequence legally attaching to such conduct.

(On behalf of the Council of the Protestant Community),
(Signed) HOGOPOS H. DJEDJIZIAN.
AVEDIS ASADOOVIAN.
AVEDIS CONSTANTIAN.

Muharrem 20, 1306 (*Eilul* 14, 1304.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 7.

Sir W. White to the Rev. C. H. Brooks.

Therapia, September 19, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to the Petition that you presented to the British Embassy to-day, I am of opinion that the best possible course to adopt is to advise the Protestant Armenians to draw up a short Memorandum in English and Turkish addressed to the Grand Vizier, setting forth the details of this case, and to send it to the American Legation and to this Embassy, begging that it be presented to the Grand Vizier. Should they think it desirable they might also send a copy, accompanied by a similar request, to the German Embassy.

I am prepared to assist the native Protestant community in laying their grievances before the Grand Vizier on this occasion pending the appointment of a Vekil, who would be the proper medium for calling the attention of the Porte to such matters.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 8.

Evangelical Alliance to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received November* 14.)

7, Adam Street, Strand, London, November 13, 1888.

My Lord,

REFERRING to former correspondence on the subject of religious liberty in Turkey, I have now, on behalf of the Council of the Evangelical Alliance, the honour to transmit to your Lordship an extract from a letter received from our correspondent in Constantinople. This matter of the continued persecution of Nikolaki Effendi has received the attention of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and the Council of the Alliance venture to ask your Lordship's kind consideration, with a view to further representations being made to the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. ARNOLD, *Secretary.*

Inclosure in No. 8.

The Rev. Dr. Dwight to Evangelical Alliance, London.

(Extract.) *Bible House, Constantinople, October* 6, 1888.

SINCE I last wrote to you the Christian merchant at Alacham, referred to in our Memorial as being in prison, has been released on bail (the Governor having attached such conditions to the bail as he supposed could not be fulfilled), and has therefore been allowed to return home. He had not been at home a week before an order to arrest him again was sent to the local Governor. Without explanation of the new charge the merchant (whose name is Nicolaki Kouzoujak Oghlon, by the way) was seized, hurried off under guard 50 miles to Samsoun, put on a steamer, and sent, under charge of soldiers, to Trebizond, where he was imprisoned and informed by the Chief of Police that he was to be banished. As soon as his arrival was known in the city one of the most wealthy Moslem merchants of the place went to the Government House and offered to become his bail, in order that he might be allowed to go out of the prison. This offer was refused, on the ground that his crimes were too great to admit of bail. Later, through the kind offices of the British Consul, Nicolaki Effendi was released on bail, and permitted to see the charges against him.

These charges are:—

1. That he has tried to deceive people, even children, into being Protestants, by offering them money.
2. That he has made his house into a church.
3. That he has opened a reading-room in his house.
4. That he has secreted a Greek girl in his house, whom he detains by force from her parents.

Nicolaki Effendi has been once examined by the Chief of Police, but the questions related only to religious doctrine, especially to the doctrine of the Trinity. This is the present state of affairs.

Meanwhile, the Protestant Central Council here finding that they could get no attention from the Porte called at the British Embassy to beg for help. The Ambassador could not see the delegation, but sent one of the secretaries, who told them that while he would present their Memorial to the Ambassador, he was bound to say that in his view the Embassy could not interfere. No reply having come to this application of the Protestants, after ten days an English member of the Evangelical Alliance called at the Embassy, with the result of securing from Sir W. White a promise to serve as intermediary in presenting a Memorial in behalf of Nicolaki Effendi to the Grand Vizier, "since the Protestants have no Vekil." The Memorial for the Grand Vizier has been prepared by the community and sent to Sir W. White, but the Secretary who received the document took occasion to remark again that the Embassy cannot interfere, since Nicolaki Effendi is a Turkish subject. Hence the Protestants are rather disheartened.

Nicolaki Effendi has been three weeks under arrest in Trebizond on these absurd charges, of whose falsity a domiciliary visit of five minutes by the police of Alacham would have given convincing proof. So far, the only thing that our efforts are known to have accomplished is the acceptance of the Protestant Memorial by the Embassy for transmission to the Grand Vizier.

No. 9.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 350.) *Foreign Office, November* 20, 1888.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 404 of the 13th ultimo, and to my reply No. 321 of the 24th ultimo, on the subject of the imprisonment of an Armenian merchant named Nicolaki Effendi, at Trebizond, I transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a letter from the Evangelical Alliance,* asking that further representations should be made to the Porte on behalf of this individual.

I also inclose a copy of my reply,† stating that the case is not one in which Her Majesty's Government could properly take any official action, but that your Excellency will be requested to inquire unofficially whether the Memorial has been considered, and with what result.

* No. 8. † No. 10.

I should be glad if you would intimate, unofficially, that the case is attracting attention in England, and would endeavour to ascertain whether any inquiry has been made into the grounds of Nicolaki Effendi's imprisonment.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 10.

Foreign Office to Evangelical Alliance.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 20, 1888.

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant relative to the imprisonment at Trebizond of an Armenian Protestant Christian, named Nicolaki Effendi.

I am to state, in reply, that it results, from a Report received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, that his Excellency had suggested the preparation of a Petition setting forth the facts of the case, which should be forwarded to the British Embassy and to the American Legation for presentation to the Grand Vizier. Sir W. White also recommended that a copy should be sent to the German Embassy, but it does not appear that his advice on this point was followed.

Sir W. White and the United States' Minister subsequently caused the Petition to be presented to the Grand Vizier. But it is his Excellency's opinion, in which Lord Salisbury concurs, that, as Nicolaki Effendi is not a British subject, the case is not one in which Her Majesty's Government can properly take official action.

Lord Salisbury will, however, request his Excellency to inquire, unofficially, whether the Petition has been considered and the facts investigated, and with what result.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 11.

Evangelical Alliance to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received November* 28.)

My Lord, 7, *Adam Street, Strand, London, November* 26, 1888.

I AM instructed by the Council of the Evangelical Alliance to thank your Lordship for the letter of the 20th instant, written by Sir Julian Pauncefote. Our Council will look anxiously for the reply to the inquiries made, under your Lordship's directions, by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, as to the result of the Petition presented to the Grand Vizier in reference to the case of Nicolaki Effendi.

There is one point in your Lordship's letter upon which I have to remark. The suggestion of Sir William White, that a copy of the Memorial should be sent to the German Embassy, has, we trust, before this, been adopted, but probably our Committee in Constantinople were waiting in the hope that instructions would be issued by the German Government to its Ambassador at the Porte in regard to the matter. We have long felt it desirable that Germany, as a great Protestant Power, should be urged to support the representations made from time to time by Sir William White and the United States' Minister upon the subject of religious liberty in Turkey. The German branch of the Evangelical Alliance has this matter in hand, and we trust that before long instructions in this sense will go forth from Berlin.

Again thanking your Lordship for the attention given to our communications, I remain, &c.

(Signed) A. J. ARNOLD, *Secretary.*